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NO HEARTS TO BREAK

NOVELS AND STORIES BY
SUSAN ERTZ



No Hearts to Break
Woman Alive
Now We Set Out
The Proselyte
Julian Probert
The Galaxy
Madame Claire
Nina
After Noon
And Then Face to Face
Now East, Now West

NO HEARTS TO BREAK

by

SUSAN ERTZ

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
ST. PAUL'S HOUSE, LONDON E.C.4

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*The only fictitious character in this book
is a minor one.*

S.E.

CHAPTER I

THE big, square, red-brick house on the corner of Gay and South Streets hummed, from morning till night, with busy life. Eleven active children pursued under its roof their diverse aims and pleasures; quarrelled and played, studied the three R's, and attracted other children; while their parents, the centre of much that went on in that growing town, had a hundred duties and interests. So that from the time the green shutters were thrown open in the morning until they were closed again at night there was an almost continual stir and bustle, which, being for the most part controlled and orderly, was not unpleasing.

Order there was bound to be, with that sturdy, conscientious citizen as the family's head. He loved order, method and propriety only less than he loved his country and respected his God. And the God of William Patterson, the poor boy from Donegal, also believed in progress, in trade and prosperity, and liked to see His sons thrifty and comfortable. Every ship that came safely into harbour, discharging its cargoes on his wharves, was, in William Patterson's eyes, forwarding God's plan, whereby the citizens of Baltimore—and the Patterson family in particular—should flourish and give thanks, and do good and hold their heads high.

William Patterson was a strong, well-rooted being. He grew, like certain plants, from a broad and spreading base, as though he wished to establish himself with the utmost firmness before ascending upwards into the

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air. He was like the great field thistle that thrusts out its powerful leaves in a circle upon the ground and makes its own place and waits until another spring before lifting its purple crown skyward. He was astute, cautious, slow-growing. He loved and took pride in his wife and children, his growing prosperity, his good repute, his growing country. Such words as Liberty and Freedom were holy to him, and holy in an awful and solemn way.

Not for him, as for so many, the painful conflict of loyalties when the Colonies broke from the mother country, and with blood and agony went their way. He knew well enough where his devotion lay. He had plenty of fine, high-sounding words for describing the struggle, for he was a man to whom black was black, evil, evil, and good, good. Oppression was to be loathed and hated, Freedom to be worshipped and to be spoken of with an emotional tremor in the voice.

At moments of crisis, when quick decisions were to be made, he made them with courage and shrewdness. When it became plain that the gathering storm was about to break, he was already engaged in the shipping business in Philadelphia. With characteristic foresight, he put all his savings into two ships and their cargoes, and set sail in one of them for France. On arriving there, he exchanged these cargoes for ammunition and sailed towards home, but decided to stop at St. Eustatius, sending the ships on without him. They reached America in time to load the guns of General Washington before Boston, guns which, had the British but known, lacked powder for so much as a single shot; and so saved his country from defeat, perhaps, or at least a grave reverse.

He himself stayed in the West Indies for some

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months, collecting and shipping material for the conduct of the war, first at St. Eustatius, and later at Martinique (quite unaware of the presence there of a dark-eyed, fourteen-year-old girl named Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie). And returning to America at last, he landed at Baltimore, and resolved to settle down there and make it his home.

He was now wealthy. He bought property, he bought more ships, he married well and presently became one of Baltimore's most admired citizens.

His marriage—his wife owned the cool and lovely name of Dorcas Spear—proved as successful as his other ventures. Mrs. Patterson adored and looked up to him, and his children were respectfully devoted; all, that is, with the exception of the eldest girl, Elizabeth, of whose critical look he was often aware and, in her early years, a little tickled by. This child claimed some sort of superiority over her brothers and sisters—even, it sometimes appeared, over her parents, for she had a way of resisting them, criticizing them and putting them right which, as she grew older, called forth such sharp rebukes from her father that she learnt to guard her tongue, though what she dared not say looked out of her eyes.

She was a strange child, a strange young girl, aloof, a little caustic, but so remarkably beautiful that even her brothers were sometimes tempted to boast of it to their friends, though they disapproved of her often enough. She was too clever, her tongue was too sharp, she exhibited a too surprising precocity. Moreover, her extraordinary loveliness had already made her conspicuous even in a town noted for its beautiful girls. Some were of French birth or blood, some of English, but nearly all had looks and an air of fine breeding that

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would have done credit to the young ladies of the famous Madame Campan's, near Paris.

But though there were other lovely girls in Baltimore, there were few, if any, who possessed Elizabeth's shrewd intelligence. Nor were their tastes hers. She read De la Rochefoucauld's *Maxims* in the original French, and could quote them, disconcertingly. She had a passion for the book. To her father, who looked with disapproval upon many of her enthusiasms, the word maxim was reassuring. He knew plenty of maxims himself, and often made use of them when admonishing his family; but he was no French scholar—though Lafayette was his friend—and had never opened the little book his daughter so prized.

"The generality of honest Women are like hid Treasures which are safe only because nobody hath sought after them," was not a maxim for Mr. Patterson's ears, and Elizabeth knew it. Nor:

"Hypocrisy is the sort of Homage which Vice pays to Virtue," though he would have approved of:

"Flattery is like false money, and if it were not for our own Vanity, could never pass in payment."

Another of her favourite books, Young's *Night Thoughts*, he looked upon as a harmless affectation. The child was far too young to understand it; it gave her a feeling of superiority to be found reading it. And yet there was a quality about his eldest daughter that he could not but admire. What was easily within her reach she had little use for—might she not have got that from him?—whether it were friends, books, ideas or accomplishments. But as she grew older, he became more and more aware of that arrogance of hers, that independence, and punished her in the hope of chang-

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ing her, with the sole result that a coldness grew up between them that greatly troubled Mrs. Patterson.

But even she, good, affectionate, lovable woman, feared, though she never put the fear into words, that they possessed in their eldest daughter a changeling, something that was not truly at home with them, that yearned for another way of life, and had a secret home in another land. She tried to teach and tame it by sensible, kindly talk.

"Let us all be thankful," she said one day, when Elizabeth, then sixteen, complained bitterly of the monotony of life in Baltimore, "that we live where we do, and in these times of progress and enlightenment. I'm sure that nowhere in the world are people as contented and happy as they are here in Maryland."

"Only because they know no better," the girl replied.

For she found little to content her there. Although it was perhaps fourth in size of all the towns of America, and although she knew no other town with which to compare it, it was still, to her, provincial and limited, a place in which she believed she could never attain her full growth.

As for its citizens, she was chiefly attracted to those who had recently come there from abroad and who could talk to her of other countries. The town was full of French people, some of whom, coming to America to help her against their common enemy, England, had settled there when the war was over; some of whom, like the cultured and wealthy Pascault family, had fled there from San Domingo to escape the massacres, and some again—though these were too humble to be Elizabeth's friends—those French Acadians and their families who had sought refuge in Baltimore after being expelled

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from Nova Scotia by the British. Love of France and the French was, in fact, only second in the hearts of most Baltimoreans to love of their own country, and while their domestic life was patterned upon that of the British, they liked to think that their fashions, their manners and their culture came from France.

All Europe, but France above all, was the spiritual home of the aspiring Elizabeth. She read of the brilliant life of the salons with an envy and a nostalgia that troubled her spirit. A life of fashion and of intellect—what a desirable, what a perfect condition! The brisk and ready, if somewhat limited, intelligences of the young men she knew made no appeal to her. She thought them coarse in their tastes and manners, and far too fond of rough sports and combats—they enjoyed, for instance, watching fights when men bit noses, thumbed each other's eyes out and mutilated their opponents. Most of them spat freely, even in the presence of ladies, a habit that seemed to have increased since the War of Independence, as if spitting had become a symbol of that "I'm as good as you are" spirit that animated so many free and independent citizens. She had, it was true, admirers—young James Randolph among them—who possessed none of these drawbacks, but at the thought of marriage with any of them a sense of shame and failure came over her, as though she, who was destined for better things, had hauled down her flag and surrendered before ever a shot had been fired.

She never failed, though, to make herself as lovely as possible for their further enchantment and for the envy of her friends, and would go with them to balls and parties willingly enough. "For if I am not there," she would say to herself, "who would know that it was

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from choice I stayed away? ” Many of the houses of the well-to-do were just outside the town, and she and the other girls of her acquaintance would often ride to them on horseback to attend dances, their pretty gowns protected by blankets. Sometimes Mr. Patterson lent Elizabeth the family coach—only a few of the wealthier families owned coaches, the rest hired them—and in the winter, when the snow fell, the young people jingled about from house to house in sleighs.

And Elizabeth could almost love the town then, all ugliness hidden away under that gracious, transforming garment; the straggling, red-brick houses squarely and sharply outlined; their marble steps and neat brick paths cleared and clean, and the flimsy little wooden houses of the poorer folk, houses which were often painted green or red or yellow, prettily roofed in white. Even the tumble-down huts in the poorest quarter about Fell's Point (where one never went for fear of some contagion) were then made picturesque; while standing up against the serene blue sky with the snow whitening their sides, the modest wooden steeples of Baltimore's modest churches took on a new and unexpected beauty.

“ We're going to have another baby,” the Patterson children would tell their friends; and as it so frequently happened that Mrs. Patterson was expecting or recovering from the birth of a son or daughter, a good deal of the housekeeping fell upon Elizabeth—to whom children early became a bore and a curse—and upon her aunt, Miss Nancy Spear, one of those spinsters whose energies, otherwise pent up, were so often found exploding in the homes of their relations.

Elizabeth tolerated her aunt—Aunt Spear, the

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children called her—though she was often enough irritated by her rigid opinions, by her bustling efficiency, and by her inability to recognize her eldest niece's superiority. Together, not without a little subdued discord, they ran the house when Mrs. Patterson was unable to do so, oversaw the large and miscellaneous staff of negroes of all ages, and kept the younger children in order.

Elizabeth was, in fact, a not unshrewd housekeeper. She knew when jellies disappeared from the shelves too quickly, when the supplies of rice or hominy gave out before their time. Her care for money, her accuracy in accounts, pleased and mollified her father, who would willingly have talked to her of many things relating to his own business if he had not soon discovered that the making of money was by no means as interesting to her as the wise disbursing or investing of it when made. One was necessary, certainly, but beneath her notice; the other received her almost passionate interest and consideration. How money, earned in ways with which she did not propose to concern herself, could be made to yield the best results, and to *grow*—that was worth anybody's care and study.

"Father," she asked once, when she was thirteen years old, "why do some investments yield four per cent and some five per cent? And why doesn't everybody invest in the things that yield five per cent?"

And she very early decided that the thing to have was property. Lands and houses, lands and houses. She liked her father to tell her, before he told the others, what new estates he was thinking of buying. When Springfield, and later Cold Spring (including the farm called "Brown's Inheritance"), became theirs,

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she was delighted, though she was far happier in town than in the country, and never cared to run wild, as her brothers and younger sisters did. It was the addition of large estates as a background, and as security, that gave her pleasure.

Between this exquisite, quick-brained little creature and two or three other young girls of the same age—little Maria Martin, for instance, and the Brown sisters—there was a certain rivalry, for they were generally admitted to be the prettiest and the most promising of Baltimore's marriageable young women. Not yet in that category were the four Caton girls, of whom Mary, the eldest, was developing so early and was already so exceptionally lovely that her mother could not resist the temptation of allowing her, now and again, to go about with older girls and be seen at parties.

"Thank heaven," Elizabeth said to her mother, "I have no sisters treading on my heels as yet. I see no pleasure in being admired as a group. People will be so busy one day exclaiming over the beauty of the Caton sisters that I am sure they will forget to admire them separately."

And she regarded Mary's rapidly maturing charms with a somewhat apprehensive eye, for the child, she suspected, would one day share with her the admiration of the town—a town which at present had but two things to boast of: its rapid growth and the beauty of its women.

For there was no doubt at all that little Mary Caton was already a personality, and even at fourteen drew to herself a surprising amount of male attention and admiration. Indeed, she was as lively and hopeful a child as ever came out of a lively, hopeful land. Every-

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one predicted a remarkable future for her; she would be the wife of a president, perhaps, or at least of a famous soldier. And it was Mr. Patterson's pleasure to treat her, when they met, with great indulgence and with compliments, as though she were already grown-up. As for Robert, his son, he had had eyes for her and for no one else since she was out of the arms of her black nurse. He loved her from her early childhood, and was never to love anyone but her.

Mr. Patterson was always pleased when his children went to stay with the Catons at their country place, Brooklandwood. He entirely approved of them, and the friendship between the two families meant much to him. He liked to think of them going forward together, respected, influential, public-spirited; he even looked up to the Catons a little because Mrs. Caton's father, Charles Carroll—the Carroll of Carrollton—had been one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and to Mr. Patterson there was no higher glory than this.

Elizabeth was a great pet of Mrs. Caton's, and she enjoyed staying with them because Mrs. Caton drew her out and encouraged her to express her somewhat precocious views on life. Also, it was the most comfortable house she knew. Mary already had her own personal attendant and body-servant, little Henrietta Johnson, whom her father had bought for her one Christmas, and this intelligent, devoted little black girl attended to Elizabeth's needs with delight and satisfaction; she had, indeed, a divided heart, for she loved her with almost the same love and loyalty that she felt for her own mistresses. Elizabeth was pleased and amused by this humble affection, and sometimes brought

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the child a trinket, or a coloured handkerchief, for she liked adoration, and was in the habit of treating with much kindness those who administered to her comfort.

All the Pattersons and their friends treated their slaves well, even with indulgence, and were shocked and disgusted when they heard of cruelties and abuses, as it shocked them to hear of cruelties to horses and dogs. But they had no fault to find with slavery itself, which seemed to them the normal state of things, and Mr. Patterson would have nothing whatever to do with the one Anti-Slavery Society that flourished in Baltimore. He called the members of it cranks and trouble-makers, and scoffed at their ideas, the more so when he found that his daughter was half inclined to take their part. For Elizabeth, the reader of books, had discovered that among many liberal-minded Frenchmen and Englishmen, slavery was held in abhorrence, and she found it a good stick with which to beat her fellow-citizens, and, when she dared, her father.

She reached her eighteenth year petted, scolded, envied, thinking of little but her own future and preparing for it by loosening all the ties that might have bound her to her home; by telling herself that she lived in a place which was unworthy of her gifts, and by reading, with careful interest, the foreign news in the *Federal Gazette*. She paid particular heed to the doings of Napoleon and his armies, and accorded him (partly because her father deplored his activities, and partly because she loved success) a fanatical admiration.

"What the peoples of the world want," said Mr. Patterson, "is to be left alone and allowed to mind their own business; trading and buying and selling, and adding to the wealth and progress of their countries.

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I've only been to Europe once, but I'm mighty thankful to be a citizen of this country, and I hope I'll never have to leave it again."

"I only hope I'll have a chance of leaving it some day," Elizabeth replied. "And then, maybe, I'll never come back."

Such words chilled and frightened Mrs. Patterson, but Mr. Patterson ignored them. It was just Betsy's way of talking.

Elizabeth had two great dreads. One was of being obliged to marry and live in Baltimore, the other, the dread of catching yellow fever, a dread that she shared with most of her fellow-citizens. This scourge had never appeared there—though ordinary fevers and agues were common enough—until five or six years previously, and many believed, as did the doctors, that the refugees from San Domingo had brought it. It was with great relief, therefore, that each summer, when the hot weather came on, the family packed itself into three great coaches with bulging sides, and swayed and jolted and rattled over the execrable roads to Springfield, or Cold Spring, and stayed there until all danger from yellow fever was past.

And they had just returned from the country, in the late summer of 1803, when an amazing visitor, a sort of bird of paradise, flew into the town and settled there for a while, and thrilled, amazed and delighted the whole community by his presence.

CHAPTER II

THE Pattersons heard of him first from their friend Commodore Joshua Barney.

This personage, a famous figure in the town, had had an amazing youth, favoured by fortune, watched over by providence and very much assisted by himself. At the age of fifteen and a half while acting as super-cargo of a brig sailing to Nice, he became, owing to a series of deaths, its commander. The brig was loaded with American wheat, and leaking like a sieve, but thanks to his almost inspired seamanship, Gibraltar was safely reached and the brig saved and put under repair. Having no money to pay for these repairs or to continue the journey, he borrowed seven hundred pounds from an astonished British commercial house in Gibraltar, and taking a young member of the firm with him, proceeded to Nice, where the Sardinian purchasers of the cargo refused to pay on the grounds that he was a minor, seized the wheat and threw him into prison. He got himself out somehow, and went on mule-back to Milan where the Court of Sardinia was; appealed to the British Minister there for justice, obtained it and returned in triumph to Nice, when the money was promptly handed over to him by the now humbled Governor. The two young men returned to Gibraltar, the debts were paid, and the fifteen-year-old captain set sail for home. On the way he put in at Alicante, and was forced to take part in the dreadful attempt, under the Irish Count O'Reilly, to take Algiers for the Spaniards, witnessing

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scenes of horror and carnage such as he had never dreamed of. At last he was permitted to sail for America, and just outside Baltimore was held up and searched by a British sloop of war, and so learnt that his country was in rebellion against the mother country. They let him proceed, and as soon as he set foot on shore he decided to join the rebels; and so became a privateer at sixteen, and distinguished himself in the war.

Mr. Patterson was fond of Commodore Barney, and proud of his exploits. He was now forty-four, and a somewhat disappointed man, as those who distinguish themselves too early in life are apt to be. He had incurred the displeasure of some persons high in the government, as well as the dislike of the French, who considered that his claims as regards naval victories were greatly exaggerated. He had certainly seen service in the West Indies, and had been friendly with Christophe, the Dictator of Haiti, also he had later visited Paris as the guest of Benjamin Franklin, and had chanced to meet, both in Paris and in the West Indies, the youngest brother of the great Napoleon, a gay, attractive, somewhat irresponsible young man named Jerome.

He was Jerome's one American friend, and was the first to hear, therefore, that this interesting youth had arrived, with a little suite, in Norfolk Harbour, having sailed from Martinique in an American ship. He made haste to invite him to Baltimore, offering him the hospitality of his home, and his suite that of an hotel of which he was proprietor. The invitation, which reached the young Frenchman in Washington, was promptly accepted, and Jerome set off accompanied by

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his doctor, his secretary, his friend General Rewbell—who was returning to marry Henrietta, the eldest of the Pascault girls—a black valet, and a prodigiously active and mischievous monkey. Still another member of the party, a young officer named Meyronnet, had gone to Philadelphia to arrange for the charter of a ship for the homeward journey. As soon as they were actually on their way to Baltimore, Commodore Barney called at Mr. Patterson's warehouse to tell him the news, which, in view of the fact that Jerome had said in his letter that he was supposed to be travelling incognito, was perhaps indiscreet.

Mr. Patterson was not, himself, greatly impressed, but when he informed his family that evening at supper, the effect on them was immediate, and one glance at Elizabeth's face made him wish that he had said nothing at all.

"I might have known," he thought, "that it's just the sort of thing to set the child agog and fill her head with foolish notions." And he would say little more, pretending that he had forgotten further details.

"Joshua talks so fast and so much that I can't remember half he says. I suppose he's excited at seeing this friend of his again."

"Think of it!" exclaimed Mrs. Patterson, not a little awed. "The brother of the First Consul, actually here in Baltimore!"

"Just what is a First Consul, sir?" asked Robert. "I suppose it's after the Roman system, but is Bonaparte the same as our President?"

"It's much more than a President," said Mr. Patterson. "Napoleon Bonaparte would never be satisfied with such powers as Mr. Jefferson has. He's a sort of

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Military Autocrat, I should say. Well, he's just a self-made man like any other, and I see no reason to make a fuss over this young brother of his."

"Nor do I," said William, who foresaw the excitement that this arrival would cause, especially among the ladies.

"If I meet him," said Mr. Patterson, helping himself to some hot cornbread that was wrapped in a napkin, "I shall treat him precisely as I would any other young man."

"You want to drag everyone down to the same deadly dull level," protested Elizabeth, and at her words the other children opened their eyes very wide.

Her father turned to her.

"And is it so low or so dull, this level where I am myself? Where we all are? For I'd drag no man lower than that."

"You'd drag down those who are above you, but I doubt if you'd drag up those who are below you," said the girl, and her tone was severely critical.

He continued to look at her, across the shining mahogany table, loaded with good food and silver and glass and china such as were to be found in few homes in America. Hadn't she everything in the world she wanted? Pretty little wretch! Always defying him, always finding fault, always asking questions to put him in the wrong, always knowing so much better than her parents did. What did she expect of him? What did she want? Pity she was too old to spank. But he had never been a man to lay hands on his children in anger except under the greatest provocation.

"Maybe I would do so. How do you know? What right have you to make such a statement?"

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Everyone felt a little uncomfortable, and Mrs. Patterson hastened to say, hoping to avert angry words:

"Of course, of course you would, Mr. Patterson! A kinder, fairer man never lived, and we all know it."

"Not all of us. Betsy considers that I am something between a fool and a knave. Really, the wonder is that two such contemptible people as her mother and myself ever produced such a paragon." He pushed back his chair. His queue—he was the last of all the men in Baltimore to wear one—stood out very straight, and his face had darkened in colour. He was angry and ruffled, and Elizabeth began to regret her words. It was folly to annoy him now, for she would have favours to ask of him soon.

"I'm sorry, sir. Truly I am. I didn't mean what I said."

"Ho, ho!" cried William. "It isn't often our Betsy pretends to be sorry."

"Hold your tongue, William! I'm not pretending, and anyway it's no business of yours."

"Hush, children, hush!" cried Mrs. Patterson, who was a hater of discord. "You two, our eldest son and eldest daughter, a pretty example to set to the rest!"

The younger children looked at one another and grinned, and swung their feet under the mahogany.

"Oh, to be away from this tedious family life!" thought Elizabeth. "To be with people who think, who have wit, who can talk of affairs. Here I am belittled and kept in my place, and treated like a child. How sick I am of it!"

And she sat silent, thinking of the young Bonaparte who was on his way to Baltimore, and imagining their first meeting. She had heard enough from her father

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to know that he was young, and to guess that he was attractive, and he was, besides, the bearer of the most famous name in all Europe. She felt, as she sat at the table, neither moving nor speaking, more alive than she had ever felt in her life. Joshua Barney was a good friend of hers, so was Mary, his wife. She would slip over to their house in the morning and hear more. Under her stillness she was in a fever of impatience. If only no one would speak to her! No, no more chicken, no more ham. No, no trifle. She had to put her hand over her plate to convince them that she wanted nothing more.

"I'm not hungry, sir. Yes, thank you, I feel quite well. I've had enough."

"You've not got a touch of fever, Betsy," her mother asked, "just before the Chases' ball? It would be a pity."

"She's too excited to eat," said Robert.

"It's all because that Frenchman's coming," said William.

She looked at them without speaking.

"I doubt it," said Mr. Patterson, stoutly. "I doubt it. Betsy has far too much sense for that. An ill-mannered young cub, I expect, full of his own importance. A glass of Madeira, William? And pass Robert's glass, too. You, John, shall have half a glass. Let's hear no more of this Frenchman. He's spoilt our supper, and I wish I'd never spoken of him. Are you coming with me to-morrow, my dear, to see the launching of the new brig?"

Mrs. Patterson said she was, and some of the younger children clamoured to go too. Elizabeth asked if she might leave the table, and obtaining her mother's con-

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sent, went to the window and peeped through the shutters. It was a moonlight night, and the serene white radiance flooded the street, silvered the locust trees and cast black velvet shadows beneath them. She went quietly out on to the verandah, where so much of the daily life of the family went on. Here, to-day, they had sat entertaining some visitors with chat and gossip and sillabubs and cake. A young man she had met at a dance the night before had called to make the acquaintance of her parents. His boots were cracked, his hair badly brushed, and he had spat eleven times—she had counted—over the railing into the street. Crude, like most of the young men she knew, but her mother had liked and approved of him. Why was she herself so different? Why couldn't she be content with the life of America? She leaned against a pillar, letting the moonlight drench her arms and shoulders. She held up her fine, small hands. Even this devoted moon could scarcely flatter them or make them lovelier than they were.

In a few days, almost certainly at the ball the Chases were giving (for Mary Barney had been Mary Chase), she would meet young Mr. Bonaparte. She had a new dress that her mother thought a trifle daring, so delicate and transparent was it, so clinging and so low. But such gowns were the fashion, and only prudes failed to avail themselves of the opportunities they gave.

"I'm glad I live in a day," she thought, "when it's *convenable* to show one's charms." She watched a shooting star fall across the sky and wished. And saw another and wished again almost before the brightness of the first traveller had faded.

"It's a good omen."

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She heard her mother call her for the second time, and went in and took up a book. Mr. Patterson presently went over some accounts with William and Robert, while Mrs. Patterson knitted. Miss Spear was out, supping with friends, and had not yet returned. John and Joseph played a game of cards in a corner, and giggled a good deal, but in a subdued way. Presently fat black Aunt Caroline came in and marshalled the younger ones to bed; Edward, George, Margaret, Caroline; Octavius, the baby, was already asleep. A peaceful household, unaware of the events that were moving upon it. The candles in their silver sconces burned steadily and shone on Elizabeth's smooth and glossy hair, as she sat at a table, a book between her elbows, her chin resting on her palms. But of Milton's *Lycidas* she understood not a single line, for her thoughts were elsewhere. She had a premonition, and her whole mind was busy with it.

.
Her brief visit to the Barneys' house, the next morning, was unobserved by her family and known only to one of the servants, Giles, who accompanied her with a basket—for she was ostensibly going shopping—and he had been told to say nothing.

Forewarned was forearmed, and she wanted to find out what plans the Commodore had made for the entertainment of his friend. She made one or two purchases and then hurried to the Barneys' house, hoping to find that one or the other of them was still at home. Her haste was needless, for Mary Barney was busy with preparations for the guest, and, in cap and apron, was supervising the activities of her eager, excited staff.

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She was a pleasant young woman, devoted to her husband and her home, and though she was at the moment deeply absorbed in housewifely duties, she was pleased enough to pause for a few minutes' conversation with her friend.

"Joshua sent for his horse at six o'clock this morning and went to meet Mr. Bonaparte," she said. "You see he's Mr. Bonaparte's only friend here." Pride in the possession of such a husband showed in her face and manner.

"There seems to be a great deal of excitement about his arrival," Elizabeth said, adding, with a carefully assumed air of boredom, "but I suppose he'll only be a disappointment. What does Joshua say of him?"

"He has only praise for him," said Mrs. Barney, "and I fully expect to find him charming. Joshua says that all the unmarried ladies here—and perhaps some of the married ones as well—are sure to lose their hearts to him."

"Dear me," said the girl. "I certainly shan't add to their number." Then realizing that she was there for a purpose, she changed her tone somewhat. "Still, it will be something to have an important stranger to look at. Will Joshua take him to the races, do you think?"

Mary Barney thought it likely enough. "Though one never quite knows, with Joshua. He may think of something better to do. But I imagine it's what a Frenchman would like most, don't you? He's almost sure to take him to Govane's, I should think. And, of course, he'll be the guest of honour at my father's ball next week."

Elizabeth did not feel disposed to wait so long. "If

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he does take him to Govane's," she said, "I might see him. Father might let me go with William or Robert. It would be amusing to see him before everyone else does. I should hate to be the only person in Baltimore who hadn't laid eyes upon such a distinguished stranger."

Mary Barney sympathized with this ambition. "Well," she said good-naturedly, "I could send you word by one of the servants as soon as I know what their plans are. Joshua says that all sorts of things are going to be arranged for his entertainment. You know, I suppose, that General Rewbell's come with him?"

Elizabeth said she had heard so. "Perhaps," she said with a little laugh, "he's already talked to Mr. Bonaparte about me. I was always rather a favourite of his."

"He's sure to have heard of you, through the General," said Mary, "and he'll hear more of you," she added, with a smile, "through us."

Elizabeth's quick little smile answered hers. It was a smile that flashed upon her face for an instant only; it was a conventional smile, a ceremonial smile, rarely a smile of genuine amusement.

"Well," she said, "I mustn't keep you idling here," and turned to go. "It's only," she paused to say, "that life here in Baltimore is so deplorably dull that I want to make the most of any little novelties or pleasures that are to be had."

"You always call it dull," said Mary, on the defensive. "I can assure you that I find plenty to do as Joshua's wife. And so would you, if you were married."

"Don't wish me married," said Elizabeth, "if I must

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marry here." She smiled again, brilliantly. "There are no more prizes to be had, thanks to you and Henrietta Pascault."

She turned to go down the path, where, by the gate, Giles waited for her, basket on arm. "Good-bye, dear Mary."

"Good-bye. I'll send you word when I know what's happening. Charles shall run over with a message. My respects to your mother, and I hope she's well."

Elizabeth went home and spent the next few hours carefully examining her wardrobe. Clothes were of such importance to her that she always had on hand everything she might require, whether it were for a ball, a trip to Annapolis, or even a visit to Washington, that interesting but unbeautiful town where General Smith, her uncle, kept open house and sat in the Senate. So that she found little to do or to have done; a bit of lace to be mended, a ribbon renewed, but nothing more. In the afternoon she paid some visits with her mother, conscious all the time of an inner elation and excitement which she kept carefully concealed. She appeared to take little interest in what was already the talk of the town, and made a great show of indifference when one of her mother's friends said to her—with that lack of *finesse* peculiar—or so the young think—to the older generation—"Here, now, Betsy, here's your chance! I'd set my cap at this young man if I were you. What a catch for one of our girls! No such opportunity ever came my way, though when I was a girl Baltimore swarmed with smart young English officers, many of them from noble families—yes, as noble as you please. My father was a strict Quaker, and I was never even allowed to go to balls until after

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I was married to my good Zeke. And then, of course"—with a shrill laugh—"it was too late."

"I hope I shall never have to trouble to set my cap at any man," said Elizabeth, with a bored air, and she began giving her mother quick, frowning little glances, to indicate that it was time to go home, glances which her mother invariably failed to interpret correctly, and always touched her hat, to see if it were awry, or her hair, or glanced down at her skirts to see if an ankle were exposed.

When Elizabeth woke up the next morning she took it as a good augury that the day was particularly fine and the early sun warm and brilliant. The distinguished strangers would see the town at its best. She was up before six, looking out of her bedroom window, which, though not in the front of the house, enabled her to gaze speculatively in the direction of the Barneys' house where, no doubt, young Bonaparte was still sleeping. To her, it was a world reborn. A conviction that her great opportunity had come so altered the familiar scene that every object took on novelty and freshness and a new meaning. The roofs of neighbouring houses, the fields beyond the town, the ships riding in the Patapsco, which showed, deeply blue, between one wooded point and another, the smoke of newly lighted fires ascending into the still air, the cackle of fowls, the barking of distant dogs, the voices of the negroes busy about their work below, all these pleased her eyes and ears as if these organs had been long deprived of the senses of sight and sound, and had rediscovered them that very morning. The world seemed packed, now, with opportunities and delights, and they were hers for the taking. She was young, she was very lovely, and the way

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was open to her. Henrietta Pascault who was soon to marry General Rewbell, was her friend. The General, who had visited Baltimore the year before, admired her extremely. He would be certain to have spoken of her to young Captain Bonaparte during those endless days at sea. Frenchmen, perhaps more than other men, have an eye for beauty and tongues to praise it. And when two young people are warmly and eagerly aware of each other before they meet, there is already a spark which only needs blowing upon. It was true that the Misses Brown might prove a danger, but there would be two of them to look at, which was distracting. As for herself, could she have summoned to her side whomsoever she pleased from the whole of Europe, there was no one she would have been more inclined to choose than a brother of the great First Consul. And that he should now have come, of his own accord, to Baltimore, accompanied by one of her friends, and be, while there, under the wing of another, was little short of miraculous.

“‘He that would make a Great Man,’” she remembered, and the maxim served as well for Woman, “‘must learn to turn every accident to some Advantage.’”

Later in the day Charles, the Barneys' serving-man, came to the house with a note for her. By great good luck she was alone on the verandah at the time, and she took it from him with a quick glance about her and dismissed him, saying that there would be no answer. He was a crooked old negro with a limp and a fondness for conversation, and she was so very short with him when he paused to praise the fine day that he rolled startled eyes at her and shambled away.

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Mary had written :

DEAR BETSY,

They are going to both race meetings, they say; Havre de Grace to-day and Govane's to-morrow. Captain Bonaparte has already paid a visit to the Pascaults', and there has met several young ladies, all of whom declare themselves in love with him. He had intended travelling under an assumed name, but as everyone here already seems to know who he is, I believe that idea has been abandoned. He is indeed very charming. Good luck to you!

MARY.

Elizabeth awaited a favourable moment, and then sought out her mother.

"Mamma," she said, "I suppose that if I were to express a wish to go to the races to-morrow, you and my father would at once think of a thousand reasons why I should not go."

Mrs. Patterson was in her bedroom, sitting in a small rocking-chair, and rocking the baby, little Octavius, on her knee. He had been crying, and the tears were not yet dried on his cheeks. He turned his big head and looked up at Elizabeth, but she looked past him, at her mother. He had been on the point of smiling at her, but seeing no smile on her face the world appeared to him as sad as when, a few minutes earlier, Caroline had taken away his wooden horse, and his face began to pucker again.

"Hush, lamb, hush," said his mother, kissing him and rocking faster. "We're rocking, rocking, rocking away, right down into Virginia, just as fast as we can go. See the trees and houses go by! Just you and me,

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and maybe we'll take sister Betsy with us if she'll come. Will you come for a ride into Virginia with us, sister Betsy?"

"Oh, mamma," said Elizabeth, with rising irritation, "do listen to what I'm saying. It's really important."

"I'm sorry, dear," said Mrs. Patterson, and the chair became still. "It's nearly Octavius's bedtime, and we were having a little ride before he went to bed. Why should you want to go to the races, dear? I thought you didn't like races."

She knew herself to be at a disadvantage with Elizabeth. She always felt capable of dealing with the other children, even the two older boys, but with Elizabeth she was at a loss. She felt that her daughter held her in contempt, and being humble, believed that she deserved it.

"Well, it happens that I do want to go to-morrow, so please forget that I once said—if I did say it—that I didn't like races. I want you to persuade father to let me go. You can if you try. If you won't go with me, perhaps William or Robert could go."

About her high-waisted dress was a girdle, the ends of which hung in front and were finished with tassels. Octavius reached for them, and she stepped back a pace, frowning.

"He won't hurt them," her mother said. "He doesn't destroy things. He only wants to play with them."

"Well, he can't. His hands are dirty. Mamma, are you listening to what I say? You think of no one but the children. Mamma, I tell you it's important that I should go to the races to-morrow. Can't you *do* something? Can't you think of *me*, just for once?"

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That patient, domestic face! Other girls had mothers who planned for them, and planned with them. Other girls had mothers who were socially clever, who could arrange things for their daughters; but she had a mother who did nothing at all but produce babies year after year, year after year. Even now she wasn't sure that her mother hadn't that look again—that *waiting* look she knew so well.

"Betsy! As if I didn't think of you all the time! As if I didn't love you the best of all—except you, my darling!" She kissed the top of Octavius's head, for though he was too little to understand, she was afraid that her words might somehow, some day, come back to him.

"What's the good of loving me if you don't help me?"

"But I will help you, if I can. Though I don't see——"

"Never mind. I want to go. Can you persuade father to let me go? That's the point."

"I'll ask him, dear."

"And if he wants to know *why* I want to go, tell him that I'm dying of ennui, that every day is the same, and has been for weeks and weeks, and that I need a change, and that the Brown girls are going and everybody's going, and that I'll ride, so he needn't even trouble to send me in the coach, and that it won't cost him one penny."

"I shan't say that. You know your father doesn't think of expense where your happiness or your good are concerned."

"Well, we shall see. My good and my happiness are concerned now, but I don't suppose it will make any

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difference. I tell you I've got to go to Govane's, to the races, to-morrow."

Suddenly Mrs. Patterson understood. She dropped her eyes, embarrassed, as if she had seen something she had no right to see.

"I'll do everything I can, dear," she said. Octavius had forgotten his troubles and was half asleep, his little body encircled by her arm, his head nodding against her shoulder. She picked him up, gently. "I'll take him to Aunt Caroline now, and presently I'll talk to your father."

Elizabeth went to her mother and gave her cheek a quick, light kiss. It was a formal kiss, without affection, but Mrs. Patterson felt recompensed. If only, she thought, as she carried Octavius upstairs, she could take Betsy's love for granted, and not long for the little demonstrations she seemed to find it so hard to make. She was greedy for her daughter's love, partly because she adored her above all the others, partly because of that haunting suspicion—it was becoming more and more a conviction—that she herself had not very long to live. But that was her own secret, and one that she never confided either to her husband or her children. It was what made her love them all with a peculiarly yearning and painful love.

Now that she had seen quite clearly what her daughter's ambition was, she felt a little frightened, but no thought of opposing it entered her head. She had always believed that Elizabeth would make a surprising marriage, and if this were it—well she would be the most envied girl in America. There *was* a difference between this young Mr. Bonaparte and, let us say, that young Mr. Warren who had called the other day. She

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could see it, if Mr. Patterson couldn't. Only if it meant that Betsy would go and live abroad, far away from them all . . .

"It's only a little excitement for the girl," she told herself. "Why should anything come of it? Perhaps he has a future wife waiting for him in France. I mustn't be always going so far ahead to meet trouble. It's one of my great faults."

Mr. Patterson, who had by now forgotten the very existence of Baltimore's distinguished visitor, saw no particular reason why his daughter should not go to Govane's if she wished to.

"Though why any refined person should want to go to race meetings is beyond my comprehension," he said. "They attract the worst elements in the town. She may get her pockets picked or her horse stolen or her clothes torn. I disapprove on principle, but as you say her heart's set on it, she may go if William will go with her. But they must take Giles, and they must be home early."

William was willing enough to go, and though he more than suspected what his sister's motives were, he loyally held his tongue. He sometimes felt that his mother's preoccupation with the younger children and her habit of bearing a child every year or so were a little hard on the elder ones, and on Betsy in particular, and though that young woman's pretensions and superior airs often annoyed him, he was good-natured enough to like to do her a good turn whenever her wishes happened not to be counter to his own.

Until they actually set off, Elizabeth hardly dared to draw a long breath. She was wearing a charming new hat, but not a new dress, as she feared the crush

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might spoil it, and she hoped for ample opportunity to display it elsewhere. Over her finery she wore a long grey dust cloak, and hanging on her arm was a little bag containing some money, a fine cloth for her face, and a little powdered chalk and orris root, for the day was warm.

Giles had no mount, but ran beside the two horses. He was a willing, active youth whom Mr. Patterson had bought ten years earlier to attend to the needs of his sons. He was very fleet, and the soles of his feet seemed made of hard leather. His good nature could always be relied on, and any sort of expedition—but a race meeting above all—delighted him.

William was a somewhat mediocre young man who lacked the charm and good looks of his younger brother, Robert, but was perfectly reliable and, as a rule, level-headed. His answers were slow but well-considered, and Mr. Patterson had a high opinion of his business ability. He kept close to Elizabeth, while Giles ran at her horse's head on the other side, sometimes catching the bridle when the animal was startled by shouting or by people waving flags or palmetto fans under his nose. William's horse pranced and fidgeted and flecked his own sides and William's boots with foam, but William was perfectly well able to hold him in and control him, and at the same time to give his attention to any acquaintances they saw, and even to pause for an occasional word with friends.

Elizabeth, however, rode most of the way in silence, her large hat draped and covered with a thick veil. She realized that the situation, if it were to be shaped as she wished, would require very delicate handling.

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She was wise enough to guess that the younger brother of the world's greatest conqueror and most famous personage might be a very spoilt young man indeed. Undoubtedly women would have made much of him; he must surely have been pursued by many. Here in Baltimore he would be the object of innumerable arch and coquettish glances, flattering speeches, invitations, advances. From her he would get nothing of the sort. She would show herself to him, make that impression on his eye and mind that she must, by her sheer perfection, make on any man, and let him see that she was aware of him, but only indifferently aware; that his presence there meant little to her, whatever it might mean to others, and that to be merely the youngest brother of the great First Consul was by no means enough. She would, in short, assume that attitude towards him which, in her father (that simple Republican and ardent disciple of Jefferson) was genuine and sincere, and the result of conviction. This was her carefully considered plan. She would show him the loveliest face in Baltimore and then turn it indifferently aside. And neither he nor anyone should ever guess what a loudly beating heart was in her breast, nor what a mounting ambition, nor how much courage to dare great things and be equal to great opportunities.

Does the world look down on a man whose ambition it is to be a great president, a great governor, a great soldier, a great banker? These things were not open to her. To her it was open to make a great marriage if she could. That was her empire. She was ambitious, but ambition has never been accounted a sin. She felt, as she rode along the packed roads towards the race-course, a potential queen.

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Govane's was not far from the town, but progress was slow, and before they reached it she lost some of her calm and became impatient.

"*Make* a way for us, Giles! We must push through. Why on earth do people *bring* babies to such a place? But William, we shall be here all day if we do nothing."

At last they reached the enclosure, a bit of much-trodden ground where seats were erected and roofed over from the sun, where coaches were drawn up, and where the "gentry" were now gathering fast. The women's bright dresses gave gaiety to an unlovely setting; little parasols bobbed and swayed, and lace and ribbons and flowers charmed the masculine eye. There were older women who regretted the lost days when men dressed almost as gaily as women, but for the most part the men of Baltimore and the neighbouring towns now wore sober-coloured or black coats, stocks, and tall, stove-pipe hats, and so added little or nothing to the brightness of things.

Outside the enclosure and the stands the cheerful crowd of poor-whites laughed and shouted and pushed each other good-naturedly beside the rails, spread blankets on the ground, unwrapped their parcels of food, opened their bottles, and prepared to enjoy themselves, while children ran about shrilly and dogs barked. As soon as Elizabeth and William dismounted, Giles led the horses away to a turn in the track where he knew the view was admirable, and where a little group of trees provided shade. Here were many grooms, coachmen and other servants, and he saw friends, and bought half a water-melon and was happy as only the people of that race, perhaps, know how to be happy; finding bliss in the crowd, in the sun, in the occasion,

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in the few hours of freedom, in the sweet, pink flesh of the melon; yesterday completely forgotten, to-morrow completely ignored.

Elizabeth had left her cloak and veil in Giles's care, and now, with William beside her, she made her way towards the stands as serenely as though she had never fretted to be there, her little bag over her arm, and a small lace parasol held between her eyes and the sun. Now that the veil was removed, her large straw hat was seen in all its splendour, decorated with nodding black ostrich plumes and bows of pink tulle. The dress, though by no means new, was one of her favourites, and was a high-waisted, buff-coloured silk, trimmed with a good deal of blonde lace. It was cut fairly low in the neck, and had tiny short sleeves that left her pretty arms bare above the elbow. Certain that she was looking her best, she bowed and smiled and greeted friends with charming graciousness. There was never anything of the tom-boy about Elizabeth, at any age. She was always, from the time she was able to run about, a little lady, first in miniature, then life-size. A shrewd little lady, always aware of her effect on others, never quite unselfconscious, possessing at all times a busy little brain that was for ever on guard, ready at any moment—if it were the right moment—to promote a quick little smile, a quick little frown, a quick little word; and rarely, rarely a tear. A clever, competent little brain that knew its business amazingly well, prompt to instigate the clever thought, the clever act. Not a back-stair brain; a front, ceremonial staircase brain, perfectly fitted to conduct its owner through the intricacies of whatever social life it happened to find itself in; cleverer perhaps with gentlemen than with

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ladies, not often trusting ladies, if the truth were known, and frequently despising them.

Her eye roved discreetly, carelessly, and she gave no outward sign of the excitement, the almost intolerable excitement, that she felt. *He was here*; Mary Barney had said he would be here. Perhaps only a few yards away from her at this moment. So near was she, perhaps, to her lover, her husband, to the man who would some day take her away from this little travesty of the real world and place her among the famous and the great in the only world that mattered—Europe. She saw Maria Martin and her mother—*what had brought them here?*—and smiled her quick, lovely smile, but did not press forward to speak to them. There was no sign of Joshua, of that thickening, robust, sea-faring figure, no sign of the French party. They were probably, she concluded, at the stables, looking at the horses.

"We may as well sit down," she said to William. "The first race will begin soon."

They found some seats, and just in front of them was a large, talkative family party from Annapolis, who had driven over for the day. They were discussing young Bonaparte, and Elizabeth and William could not help hearing what they said.

"I saw him a moment ago," said an elderly lady.

"Oh, what's he like?" asked a young woman who seemed to be her daughter. "I'm dying to see him. Mary Ellen told me he was as handsome as could be, and charming beyond words."

"I thought him handsome enough," said the elderly one. "Dark, slender; a mere lad he looked to me, but then, of course, I'm an old woman. What brought him here to America, I wonder?"

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"Why?" asked a young man. "Why shouldn't he come? Everyone wants to come to America if they can. It's a wonder to me that anybody stays in Europe."

"Perhaps he's thinking of choosing an American wife from among our young girls," said yet another lady, a spinster, Elizabeth thought, of about thirty-five.

"He'll have no trouble finding one, if that's the case," said the young man. "There doesn't seem to be a female in Maryland who isn't half out of her wits about him. They talk as if they'd marry him if he was a two-headed monster. It's enough for them that he's a foreigner and the brother of a famous man."

"James, James," said the old lady, disapprovingly, "our girls have more pride than you seem to think."

"Have they?" he said. "Well, just take a look now. There he is, with Miss Maria Martin, Miss Brown and two or three other belles, all pressing round him. Now am I right or am I not?"

"I don't see anything to make a fuss about. They're merely walking together in a group, with some other French gentlemen," the old lady said. "What a pretty group, too, and what pretty uniforms! I do like to see pretty uniforms."

"They say he sleeps in them," the young man retorted.

William gave his sister a powerful nudge.

"There's your Frenchman," he said. "See him? That's what you came for, isn't it?"

"I've already seen him," his sister said. "And keep your elbow to yourself, please."

"I was afraid you might miss him. Don't you want to go nearer and have a better view?"

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William had lowered his voice somewhat, but not so much that the young man from Annapolis was unable to hear. He turned about and looked at Elizabeth, who, though aware of his glance, carefully avoided meeting his eyes. She was furious with her brother.

"I wouldn't stir a yard to look at him or any other man," she said, "and you know it."

"And I believe you, you little beauty," thought the youth from Annapolis, and wondered who she was, for he thought he had never seen a face so lovely.

The little group that surrounded Captain Bonaparte hid him somewhat from Elizabeth's view, but she had already seen enough to know that his looks were all that she could have desired. Not very tall, not very short; well made; really very handsome indeed in his tight-fitting French naval uniform, with its long tails. He was dark, as, in her opinion, a man ought to be. He was vivacious. He laughed and talked a great deal, moving his hands and shoulders as most French people did. A pretty girl from Philadelphia was the nearest to him. She kept pressing nearer, to speak to him, so that sometimes her chin nearly touched his shoulder, and her big bonnet almost hid the young man's face.

"He won't be taken in by that sort of behaviour," Elizabeth thought. "An American might like it, but I'm sure a Frenchman would not. A Frenchman likes to pursue, not to be pursued."

The race was over; six horses had flashed past, while people stood on their seats and shouted and yelled and waved handkerchiefs. Now it was ended, and decorum reigned again. Elizabeth had not even been mildly thrilled. She knew nothing about the horses and cared less, and not for anything would she have risked a

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penny on one of them. Racing, she thought, was a silly affair, but at least it brought people together, and provided women with an excuse for dressing prettily and being seen.

"Let's go and stroll about," suggested William, to her great relief, and she followed him, protesting that she would have been quite happy to stay where she was. As she passed near the little group by the railings she caught Joshua Barney's eye. His jovial, highly coloured face lit up with pleasure at the sight of her, and he took off his hat and waved it. She saw that he wanted her to come and join them, and that being of all things the last that she wished for, she shook her head at him and passed on, smiling a little as if to say, "No, no, that's all very well for the other girls, but not for me." She saw him pluck young Bonaparte by the sleeve, speak to him, and at the same time incline his head in her direction. She had now an uninterrupted view of the young Frenchman, and she knew that in another instant he would discover her. His eyes were searching the crowd for her as he stood at Joshua's shoulder. She allowed her own eyes to rest upon him until they met his, and then she saw the look of quick surprise and admiration on his face. They looked straight at each other across the intervening space for perhaps ten seconds—a ten seconds equally thrilling to both—and then she turned coolly away without a change of expression and put a hand on William's arm.

"Take me to the stables now," she said. "I like to watch the grooms rubbing the horses down after a race."

Not even the somewhat watchful and suspicious William—he loved to discover a weakness in his sister

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and rally her about it if he could—had noticed that significant mingling of looks. She gave no sign whatever that her heart was fluttering wildly in her breast and the lively blood pulsing and racing through her body. She appeared to be looking at the horses, but she saw instead nothing but that vivid, dark young face, those rather bold eyes that had made no attempt to hide their delighted admiration. Everything had happened precisely as she had wished it to happen; which augured very well indeed for the future.

When they made their way back to the shelter of the stands again, the group about the Frenchmen had increased in size. They seemed to be holding a little court. General Rewbell was beside young Bonaparte now, and as Elizabeth and William passed within a few feet of them she gave the General a smiling glance and waved her parasol. She knew that Captain Bonaparte's eyes were following her, but did not give him a look. Her ears, however, were very sharp, or perhaps they were alert for the sound of his voice, not yet heard, for as she moved slowly past him in the crush she heard him say, lightly, gaily, in the General's ear:

"Voilà ma belle femme!"



CHAPTER III

No Minister of State entrusted with the grave affairs of his country, and about to set out on a delicate mission, could have been more aware of the importance of his errand than was Elizabeth when she started off in the family coach for the Chases' ball.

She was accompanied that evening only by Robert. William did not care for dancing, Mrs. Patterson was feeling far from well, and Mr. Patterson would not leave her side. Elizabeth was not at all displeased at the idea of being so lightly chaperoned, for she wished above all things to be given a free hand. Without interference, she felt herself to be quite capable of managing the whole affair.

She knew she was looking her loveliest, and that was good enough for any man, whether a Bonaparte or a John Smith. She knew, too, that she was sufficiently well dressed to have appeared at any Court in Europe. Moreover, repeating themselves over and over again in her brain were the reassuring words, "*Voilà ma belle femme.*"

It was impertinent, of course. She had been *meant* to hear. It was outrageous, but, oh, it gave confidence! She had no need now to make half a dozen different schemes for half a dozen eventualities. He himself would undoubtedly find a way to spend as much as possible of the evening with her. She need not lift a finger. She guessed that there had been a certain

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amount of talk about her between young Bonaparte, General Rewbell and Joshua Barney. Her two acquaintances had boasted a little, perhaps, of her beauty. It was not at all unlikely that, half in jest, half in earnest, they had suggested her as a possible wife for him; that he had laughingly taken up the jest and had frequently spoken of her as "*Ma belle femme*", so that the words had grown to be a little joke with them all. Well, she had no fault to find with that. In fact they were playing into her hands, all three of them, as though she had coached them herself.

She already had an instinctive understanding of French character; she understood its subtlety, its lack of sentimentality, its realism, and at the same time its childishness. She already felt that she understood Jerome Bonaparte, without a word having been exchanged between them. She guessed that he would act impetuously, but without real impetuosity; that in whatever he did, reason of a sort would play a large part. He would deceive others, perhaps, but himself, never. These perceptions were perhaps dim, but they were there. She expected to find him charming; she even guessed that she might fall in love with him. Given the opportunity, she was quite determined to marry him. When one wishes above everything in the world to escape from a certain place and to go to another place where one is sure that all one's conditions will be immensely improved, and when there is a fine vessel waiting to take one there, one does not hesitate. Jerome Bonaparte was, at present, that vessel. What else he became, rested with him.

The Chase Mansion, as people were fond of calling it, lay in several acres of garden, and was bounded by

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Eutaw, Lexington, Fayette and Paca Streets. It was a handsome, pillared residence, built in the Colonial or Georgian style, and was one of the most admired and praised of all the homes of Baltimore. Now everything was bustle and movement there; guests were coming on foot and on horseback; chaises and coaches were driving up to the door, and lights streamed out between the tall columns. Above the noise of the arriving and departing vehicles could be heard the shouts of the negroes who were running this way and that with flaming pine torches, lighting the way. None of the pleasing hubbub attendant upon an evening party was lacking, and Elizabeth's spirits, already high, rose higher. Through the open doors and windows came the delicious sound of fiddles being tuned; one of the sweetest sounds to young ears, and to ears that never grow old, that life has to offer. The day had been warm, but there was a slight chill in the air now, so that ladies who hoped, later, to stroll about the grounds with their escorts, were glad they had remembered to bring their light shawls.

The two young people went up the broad, shallow steps, Robert looking youthfully handsome in a long-tailed dark blue coat. He was almost as eager to begin the evening as his sister, for little fourteen-year-old Mary Caton would be there for an hour or two, and he asked for no greater happiness than to be where she was. As they entered the warm, softly lighted house, that sweet discord of tuning strings tugged at both their hearts. To Robert it was merely the prelude to a few hours of happiness. To Elizabeth it was a moment big with destiny—but a destiny that awaited the skilful guiding of her own hand. She had never in her life

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before felt so utterly certain of her ability to guide it as she wished.

Samuel Chase was a Judge of the Supreme Court, and lived in a style that befitted his high position. The interior of his house was as fine as the exterior, and the broad staircase with its delicately curved mahogany hand-rails was the finest in the town. Half-way up on the landing stood a courteous old black butler, bowing and smiling and repeating as he ducked his white head: "Evenin' ladies, evenin' gempmens. Ladies on de right, gempmens on de lef'."

"Wait for me here on the landing," said Elizabeth to Robert. "I hate going down alone."

In Mrs. Chase's great bedroom under the portico a group of girls were being taken out of their cloaks or were tidying themselves in front of the mirrors. In the light of the candles, every one of them looked lovely. In a chair by the dressing-table sat Mary Caton, a young black house-servant kneeling at her feet. Really, thought Elizabeth, it was quite absurd the way the child was allowed to go to grown-up dances, as though she were seventeen!

"Hello, Bet!" Mary cried out, gaily. "Look, I tore the hem of my dress getting out of the coach."

"Dey do say as how it's a good omen," said the soft-voiced Blanche, who was mending it. "Leastways it's sho' to be a good omen for you, Miss Mary."

"Oh, omens!" said the girl, laughing, "who cares about omens? I don't."

"Neither did I, at your age," said a girl, who was fastening a rose in her hair in front of a mirror. Elizabeth, after throwing off her cloak, went to Mary and gave her cheek a light kiss.

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"You look lovely, child. What a pretty dress!"

"Do you really think so? So do I. Oh, Blanche, hurry! I have to go home early, you know."

Elizabeth went to a mirror and leaned forward, examining her face in the candle-light. Her dress was of apricot-coloured India muslin made over a tightly fitting foundation of satin and trimmed with velvet ribbons of Nattier blue. Her hair was dressed high on her head, and glossy curls fell and swung enchantingly on either side of her face. She was showing as much as she dared of a very lovely bosom. She was entirely satisfied with her reflection, and turning to leave the room she threw a kiss to Mary, who was still in Blanche's hands, and went to meet Robert.

Just inside the ball-room—which was the big drawing-room stripped of its furniture and its floor polished till it shone like glass—they shook hands with their host and hostess. Then Robert saw Mrs. Caton, and went to her, and Elizabeth was at once surrounded by several young men, who asked her to be their partner in the quadrille that was just being formed. She gave her hand to the first comer and took her place, a bright colour in her cheeks. For she had already seen that she was being watched by that same dark, bold pair of eyes that had looked into hers two days before. Jerome Bonaparte, with Maria Martin for his partner, was in the same group, and he did not attempt to disguise his pleasure in the fact.

"I hope no one will introduce us," thought Elizabeth. "I want to see how he will contrive to meet me."

But it was not young Bonaparte himself who brought them together. It was luck or destiny, behaving in that

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unexpected way to which human beings can never accustom themselves, and promoting the affair in its own curious fashion.

In the quadrille their hands touched; he pressed her fingers before he released them again, and looked with admiring intensity into her eyes. A moment later, both hands flew to her head and she gave a little cry. In passing close to him a fine chain attached to his uniform had swung out, as she bent to curtsy, and caught itself in her hair. The little incident amused everyone, and the music and the dancing stopped while he gently disentangled it. She stood perfectly still, with bowed head, while he did his best to release her without hurting her, and the moment seemed to both of them eternal.

"Go on," she said, as he hesitated. "If you have to break a hair or two it doesn't matter."

"Then stand quite still, quite still," he said, with an accent that at once delighted her ears. His sleeve was touching her face, and presently his hand touched her cheek, causing a little thrill to go through them both. "I shall soon make you free, poor bird. *Voilà!* it is finish. I hurt you? No? You forgive me, for my wicked chain?"

"Yes, if you assure me that my hair is not so untidy that I must go upstairs and arrange it again."

"It is beautiful, your hair. It is beautiful."

"Good. Now let us go on with the dance."

"You will be my partner for the next?"

"I already have a partner."

"Then there must be another, when you will be my partner."

"Then let us say the one after the next."

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"If I can exist so long," he said.

She flashed an amused little smile at him.

"You will."

"Do not be so sure."

Really, for a young man—he was not yet nineteen—he seemed amazingly experienced. That slow, caressing way of speaking—it was almost improper. Those very eloquent dark eyes which clung to her own; that touch, deliberate, yet respectful! He knew; he knew how to conduct an affair of the heart, that was certain. He knew how women liked to be treated. There was a touch of raillery, of exaggeration, of jesting in his manner which at any moment, she suspected, might become either more jesting or more serious. If he saw that he was about to be treated with coldness, or perhaps repulsed, the whole affair would become a little joke, so that the woman who was about to repulse him would be made to feel a fool for having taken him too seriously. If, on the other hand, he saw that the affair was prospering, the raillery would vanish—to reappear, perhaps, at some future date.

A true coquette is never at a loss. Her understanding of men is intuitive; or, knowing one, she knows all, and Frenchmen, Swedes. Englishmen or Russians are all alike to her. What she both stimulates and responds to is maleness. Nor do position, nor age dismay her. Her quarry is the essential man.

No one was better able than Elizabeth to give Jerome Bonaparte's name and family their full importance; but in her manner to him was no deference whatever; she seemed incapable of even the faintest of flutters; she was far too clever to be coy.

Before the end of that dance, when he was her

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partner, when he scarcely took his eyes off hers, when he whispered as they passed, "Never, never do I see anyone so beautiful," she knew that it was not only going to be easy to go aboard that vessel, but easy also not to care very greatly where it took her, if only it would sail on, and on, and on.

When he begged her to walk in the garden with him afterwards, she laughingly refused.

"No, no, it is much too chilly. Besides, I am not at all romantically inclined. Take one of these other young ladies with you."

His English was limited, and it was laboured. He spoke as if the difficult words were being torn from him, but in so charming and caressing a voice and tone that to hear him was a delight.

"Thank you, but if you do not go, I do not. Then if you will not walk, will you talk?"

"We are talking now."

"It is not good where others may hear. We shall find a place. Come with me."

And he took her by the hand and led her, as one child leads another, to Judge Chase's library, a small room filled with law books and containing an enormous writing-desk, some Revolutionary portraits, an arm-chair or two, and a settee which made an angle with the fireplace. This was vacant, and though there were two young men in the room examining the law books instead of dancing, they presently went out and left the young couple in sole possession.

"Good. We have luck. I do not like everyone shall hear what I say to you. Now, most beautiful Miss Patterson, I will tell you many things. You know what I call you?"

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She had no intention whatever of letting him know that she had heard his remark at the races.

"No," she said, "and perhaps I wouldn't like it if I did. Tell me something much more interesting. Tell me how you came here, and why, and what you were doing before you came."

"Aha! So you wish me to make to you my confessions. *Bon!* You wish I tell you all my life? I will, I will if you like I do."

"Oh, dear, no! Not now. We should be sitting here all night. Just tell me how you happened to come to America."

"That is easy. My big brother, he make me *Commandant* of a fine ship, *L'Epervier*. I go with her to Martinique."

"To Martinique?" interrupted Elizabeth. "My father has been there."

"Ah! Then we shall have *much* to speak about, your father and I." And he looked at her with meaning.

"Go on," she urged. "I won't interrupt any more."

"*L'Epervier* is a fine ship, I say, but she is not so fine as she look. She roll-ll"—he made an expressive gesture with his hand—"she do this, she do that, she take much water. But I am brave man." He struck his chest in mock pride. "I sail, I sail. I go here, I go there. I catch fever. I am very sick. I almost die. But I get well. One day, near Dominica, there is a foreign ship. I speak to her. She do not reply. I speak again, still she do not reply. So I fire. She go on. I fire again. There is damage. She stop. She run up the English flag. *Peste!* I have made a folly, but how should I know? We are not at war with England—for a little

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while, we are not at war. Soon, I know we will be again, for England do not wish to give up Malta, and she is afraid of my big brother. So I hurry to Martinique. I say to my Admiral, Villaret-Joyeuse, 'I have break Peace of Amiens.' He say, 'This is not good.' He say, 'Better you should go back to France and tell your brother. You must not stay here. Go back to Europe.' But I know—something here tell me"—he tapped his forehead—"that soon, perhaps already, England will make war again. I know that she watch for me. She like much to capture me. I do not wish to be capture by the English. So I think best I do not go back to France yet, but go on an American ship which sail for Norfolk. So I come. I come to Norfolk, with my suite, and I am well please to leave that ship, *L'Epervier*, for always. One day a storm will come, she will sink to the bottom. She look fine, but she bad like a rotten egg." He gave Elizabeth a charming smile, flung out his hands and added, "*Me voilà!*"

"And what next?" she asked.

"In America I think I find a good ship that will take me to Europe again. Till then, I am very happy here. I go to Washington, to see Pichon, our Consul-General. Everyone is kind. Then my good friend Joshua Barney say, 'Come to Baltimore.' I am glad to come. I do not even stop to see your President. When I am on board the ship, General Rewbell tell me many times that in Baltimore I will see a most beautiful girl. When I see Joshua Barney, he say the same. When I am at the races I see her. To-night I see her again. I look at her, I look and look; I do not know what to say to her, she is so beautiful."

"It seems to me you know very well what to say,"

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she answered coolly, "and I expect you say it to everyone."

He leaned nearer to her, one arm along the back of the settee.

"No, please, please, Miss Patterson, do not say that! It is not so. I say it only to you. I have travel much, but I never see before such a face, such eyes, such hair, such a *jolie taille*. Never, never! "

"That's quite enough of compliments," she said, smiling. "They don't delight me as they do some women. 'Flattery,'" she quoted, in French, "'is like false Money, and if it were not for our own Vanity could never pass in payment.' "

"*Tiens, tiens!*" He looked both surprised and amused. "That is De la Rochefoucauld. You know him! And you know French! "

She raised her little arched brows and appeared to look none too pleased.

"And why not? We are not barbarians here, though no doubt Baltimore seems to you barbaric enough."

"Me I find it charming. Charming! "

"So would I, if I expected to leave it within a few weeks. When do you sail for France? "

He shrugged his shoulders.

"That I do not know. Meyronnet is now in Philadelphia, and he write he has found a ship for us. Perhaps we will go on her, perhaps we will not. Myself I would like to stay here for a long time. Perhaps for ever."

"How flattered we should be," she answered, with her quick, self-possessed little smile. "Tell me, is it true that you have a negro servant from San Domingo, and a monkey, and your own doctor, and a secretary,

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and half a dozen other persons to wait upon you and attend to your wants? ”

“ It is true. You think that funny? ” He pronounced it *funny*.

Lest he should think her ignorant of the way of travel of important personages, she hastened to say, “ No, not funny at all. I merely asked, as a matter of interest. I fear your monkey will die when the weather turns cold.”

“ Then Christophe, my servant, will weep. Soon I will introduce to you my good secretary, Le Camus. And also my good doctor, Garnier. Please, when may I call upon your parents? ”

She said, with mocking irony, that they would be *honoured* to receive such a famous person.

“ You make fun of me. It is true that I myself am no one. *Je suis le frère de mon frère. Voilà tout.* ”

“ Oh, now you are too modest! You are a good sailor, and brave. You wear a most beautiful uniform. I don't know what else you capture with it, but you capture ladies, that is certain.” And she put her hand to her hair. “ I must see if it needs attention.” She got up and went to a mirror surmounted by a golden eagle, which hung over the mantel. He followed her.

“ It needs nothing,” he murmured, watching her face in the glass. He stood very close to her. “ When my chain caught your hair I took it *comme presage, comme augure.* ”

“ *Comme mauvais presage?* ” she asked.

“ As the best and happiest of all my life.”

They looked at each other in the glass. He was so close to her that she knew she could not lower her arms, which were still raised to her head, without touching

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him, and she wished not to give him that satisfaction. So she retreated a step, looking into his eyes now, instead of into the glass.

"You go quickly, Captain Bonaparte."

"I do not go so quickly as my heart."

"C'est joli, au moins!"

"You speak French like an angel. Like an angel!"

"Not so well as I wish to speak it." She opened her fan and moved it slowly. "I long to go to France."

"Come with me," he pleaded, and his audacity charmed her. "Beautiful, beautiful Miss Patterson, come with me!"

"I will think about it," she said. "Now it is time for us to go back and dance again."

"No, no! To-night there is no such word as must. Stay here with me."

"Tell me some more things about yourself, then. Or tell me about your wonderful brother."

"He is good to me. He spoils me. I am his——" He hesitated for the word and she supplied it.

"His favourite?"

"Yes."

"Because you're the youngest, I suppose, not for any other reason."

"That is not so. He loves me because I am me. Jerome. Just as some day you . . ."

"So he is very kind to you," she interrupted. "He is a good brother."

"Just as some day," he persisted, "you will love me."

They had gone back to the settee, and were sitting as before, Jerome with one arm along the back of it, Elizabeth correct and demure, moving her fan slowly to and fro. Unless he had put his hand over her heart

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he could not have guessed how it was beating, for she gave no sign of that tumult.

"You flatter yourself, Captain Bonaparte. I do not love so easily."

He took her free hand, raised it and kissed it softly. In all his little acts he was almost frighteningly skilful. Might she come to love him? Her natural shrewdness warned her against it. Should she fall in love she might lose the upper hand, lose her power over him. It was not a part of her plan to love him; nor was he then, or ever, she suspected, a being whom it was wise to love.

"I will tell you," he murmured, "what I call you. Ever since I first hear of you I call you '*Ma belle femme*'."

"Perfectly outrageous," she said, taking away her hand, "and highly impertinent. I forbid you to speak of me like that again. Or to think of me like that."

He recaptured her hand and held it firmly.

"My thoughts I cannot help. They have gone even farther than my words. They have gone—ah! you would be surprise how far. Beautiful Miss Patterson my beautiful Elise, listen." He leaned still nearer, so that the arm along the back of the settee almost encircled her. "I am in love. I am in love. I am in love."

"I hear you. But that means nothing. You are in and out of love once a week, I have no doubt."

"I am in love for the first time. I swear it. Naturally I have make love. Yes. Often. But never have I been in love."

"You are paying me a very pretty compliment, and as such I appreciate it. Now let us go back."

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But he held tightly to her hand, and kissed it again.

"No, no, why do you wish to end this moment, this perfect moment? We are alone. Music and voices are far away. No one comes. I am with the most beautiful girl in the world. I love her. I must tell her so. Elise, Elise! *Je t'aime à la folie!* I go mad, looking on that face!"

"You go mad too easily, Captain Bonaparte." She got up and tried to draw her hand away, but with dignity, not jerking it away. He held it, however, too tightly. "Please, let me go, monsieur. We have talked enough nonsense."

"Believe that I have not talked nonsense! Believe that I say only what is true!"

At the back of the settee was a screen, and she could see round it, from where she stood, into the hall.

"Please," she said, "let me go. My brother is coming, and Mary Caton. I think they're looking for me . . . no, they've gone into the garden. But I think they're looking for me all the same."

"Then stay with me till they find you."

She sat down again, with seeming reluctance.

"*Alors, soyez sage.*"

"I will be good. I swear it."

"This is a small town," she said, "and people in small towns like to gossip."

"To . . . gossip?" He looked puzzled.

"*Bavarder.*"

"Ah, *ça!* We do not care."

"I care. And my father and mother will care very much."

"Elise, listen. Nothing matter but you and me. I will stay here, in America, because you are here. I will

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not go to France. Tell me, you like I stay here? ”

She replied, coolly, indifferently:

“ Certainly, if it pleases you. We shall be honoured. You are an important foreigner. Everyone will be delighted, and New York and Philadelphia will be very jealous because you prefer Baltimore to them.”

“ Ah, you only make fun. You lovely girl, you cruel girl! Elise, to-night I am happy, for I fall in love, for the first time. I do not joke. I speak what is true.”

She looked at him less calmly.

“ You go too fast.”

“ But when I find perfection why should I wait? ”

She lowered her eyes to the splendour of his uniform.

“ What is that uniform, Captain Bonaparte? It is very pretty.”

“ That is the uniform of a French Naval Commander. I am please you like it.”

“ Do you always wear uniforms? ”

“ Yes, why not? I like them. Me, I love beautiful things. Even when I am fourteen, fifteen, my big brother let me buy what I like. Sometimes I spend so much he get angry. But not much angry.” He laughed at some recollection, showing his fine teeth.

“ How did you learn such good English? ”

“ *Tiens!* I have been to school. I have teachers. But my English is not good, he is horrible. You laugh at me.”

“ Why did you trouble to learn it? I’m surprised that you were allowed to learn it. that hated language.”

“ It is necessary. Some day when my big brother conquer England, I may be King of England.” But he evidently did not intend this to be taken too seriously, for he laughed again.

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"He'll never do that," she said. "He'll never conquer England, even though he may conquer all the rest of Europe."

"But he must. Because England she will always make trouble. But I do not want we talk politic. I want we talk of love. You have never fall in love, my beautiful Elise, but you will, and you will fall in love with me."

"Call me Miss Patterson, please."

"You do not like Elise? But it is beautiful."

"It may be beautiful, but it is not *convenable*."

His hungry eyes never left her face.

"Elise, when may I come to your house? I come to-morrow, I bring Le Camus. I shall talk with your father."

"About Martinique? He'll be much interested."

"About you. I will say, 'Sir, I have fall in love with your most beautiful daughter.'"

"He knows how to deal with young men who tell him that."

Then, suddenly, Robert and little Mary Caton found them. Robert was not looking altogether pleased with his sister. People, she guessed at once, had been talking. She introduced her brother, of whose looks and manners she had reason to be proud, and Mary, whom Jerome said he had already had the pleasure of meeting earlier in the evening. The child looked entrancing, in her white muslin, her big, intelligent dark eyes alight with excitement, her light, reddish brown hair dressed high, with curls framing her cheeks. She said she had excellent fun escaping from her mother, who wanted to take her home, but that the game was up, now, and she must go. The four of them returned to

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the ball-room, Jerome walking at Mary Caton's side, which gave Robert an opportunity of saying to his sister, in a low voice:

"You've been with him for hours. Everyone's noticed."

"Dear me," she said, "has the evening been so dull that they have had nothing else to think or talk about?"

Jerome was bitterly disappointed that their *tête-à-tête* had been interrupted. He thought many of the Baltimore girls lovely, distinguished and vivacious, but he had eyes only for Elizabeth. Her perfection had almost robbed him of his wits. So small, so exquisite, so clever, so completely mistress of herself, and so beautifully dressed! She could have appeared at any ball in Paris; at the Tuileries; anywhere. In fact almost all the Baltimore ladies dressed charmingly. The city, it was true, was of little interest, the streets were badly paved or not paved at all, the houses, with the exception of a few, were mediocre, the customs, he considered, were crude. But the women, the women were enchanting! And the young girls—how amazingly free and natural! He was immensely amused and pleased by all that was taking place, and loved the fuss and excitement that his arrival had caused. Never before had he felt so certain that he was a famous personage. And it was good that he had come. He would uphold and enhance the prestige of his brother, not only by his impressive suite, but by his openhandedness, his gay uniforms, his readiness to like and be liked. With a brother who had subjugated half Europe, any amount of money should be at his disposal. Pichon, the Consul-General in Washington, had, it was true, been a trifle over-cautious, a trifle over-anxious to see him depart again without

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delay for France, but he would soon convince him of the importance of making a good impression. He found himself in a more than friendly country which only asked to pay him homage, which showed itself immensely flattered by his presence. So much honey to be sucked up! Why should he hurry away? And now, and now this lovely girl. . . . He would send for Meyronnet, and tell him there was no need to trouble just yet about a ship. Also it might be dangerous for him to embark at present, with British warships on the watch. Napoleon cared much for his youngest brother's safety. Besides, had he not been ill? Had he not suffered the terrors of the yellow fever in San Domingo, where French soldiers had died like flies, where Le Clerc, poor Paulette's husband had died; and the whole tragic expedition had come to nothing? He had eaten bad food, endured weeks of rough weather, borne his share of hardship. At eighteen, one must have one's pleasures. Here there were lavish tables, cellars filled with vintage wines, lovely girls, horses to ride, sports to amuse one, and a whole population imploring him to stay. Stay he would and as long as it pleased him.

Once again he begged Elizabeth to be his partner in a quadrille, but she refused. "We have set enough tongues wagging," she said.

CHAPTER IV

Mr. and Mrs. Patterson had long been in bed when the two young people returned from the dance. The coach, clattering up to the front door, woke Mr. Patterson. He got up, and holding his watch to the embers of the dying fire, saw that it was after one. "They'll have enjoyed themselves," he thought, and went to sleep again.

He had gone to his warehouse the next morning before Elizabeth, who was permitted to stay in bed till ten after a dance, was awake. But Mrs. Patterson, going to her room before she was out of bed, heard from her daughter's lips how young Mr. Bonaparte, the guest of honour, had paid her marked attention, danced with her as often as she would let him, and followed her out to the coach to say good night.

"Dear me!" Mrs. Patterson exclaimed, "I hope he didn't make you too conspicuous."

"I think," said Elizabeth, "that a good many of the older ladies were annoyed because he paid so much more attention to me than to their daughters. But I must expect disapproval. He asked if he might call on you this afternoon, and I said that he might. He wants to bring his doctor and his secretary with him."

"What?" cried her mother, alarmed. "Three of them! Oh, dear! Your father ought to be here too, and he'll never be back in time, I know. Are they really coming here? Because if they are, I ought to

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see at once to the refreshments. How you can take it all so calmly is beyond me. The brother of the First Consul! I feel quite bewildered."

She had once been a very pretty woman, but now, at forty-two, considered that she had had her day. She wore plain stuffs, and kept a cap on her hair, and her face, though smooth and unlined, was full of maternal apprehensions. She had never dared to be as happy as she might for fear of being overtaken by some catastrophe. She had lost only one child, little Augusta, who had lived to be two years old, and she knew that she was far more fortunate than most mothers of large families, who often lost more than they were able to rear. But little Caroline was delicate, and, too, she feared for Octavius, who failed to put on weight as he should have done. And now it seemed that her dread of losing her treasure, her darling, was only too well-founded. It was folly, folly to love her so, and she knew it, but it was a love she could not control. Hiding her fear, she said that they must try to persuade Mr. Patterson, at dinner-time, to come home early in the afternoon, and then hurried away to give instructions to the servants.

The news put the whole household in a flutter, and when Mr. Patterson returned for his dinner, at two, he was not slow to observe that some excitement was afoot. When told the cause of it, and urged to come home early, he said he would see about it, and he added that he presumed his wife and daughter would have the good sense to treat this young Bonaparte precisely as they would treat any other visitor. To which Mrs. Patterson replied, quickly, lest Elizabeth should say something to annoy her father:

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"I was always brought up to treat any visitor, no matter who, as if he or she were the highest in the land."

Elizabeth was very short with the younger children when they asked questions or got in the way of the servants.

"Keep out of sight, all of you," she ordered. "Mr. Bonaparte will think we keep a school here if you all hang about and peer and pry. Mamma, they're not to come into the drawing-room this afternoon, any of them. Will you please tell them so?"

"They've promised me," said her mother, "that they'll all be out of doors, or upstairs. I'm sure they'll be good. Don't scold them."

At four, a hired coach—it was the best Baltimore had to offer—drove up to the door, and out of it got three men, one of them, Jerome, in uniform. Elizabeth saw them from behind the curtains of her mother's bedroom window, and urged her mother to go down first and receive them.

"I'll follow," she said, "in about ten minutes."

Did she but know it, out of nearly every window in the front of the house there peered a child's or a negro's face, for the whole household was too excited to refrain from seeing what it could.

Mrs. Patterson was not quite ready; she had grown stouter, and her best gown needed much pulling and jerking before it would fasten. Meanwhile the three visitors were shown into the drawing-room, where they amused themselves by examining and admiring the simple, white-painted panelling, the glass chandeliers, the pictures, rugs and hangings. There was a painting of Lafayette over the mantel, the work of a Baltimore

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artist; "That fellow there," said Jerome, nodding towards it, "is only less admired than Washington in this country"; and another, facing it across the room, of Mr. Patterson, in queue and small-clothes. There were also some old scenes of Baltimore harbour, fifty years earlier and these Jerome examined with real interest and curiosity, drawing Dr. Garnier's attention to the rapid growth of American cities.

By the fire-place was a work-table on which lay a tambour frame with an unfinished sampler stretched upon it. Jerome next looked at that, and saw the name Margaret Patterson worked in cross-stitch, and under it the date of her birth, 1791. He showed the sampler to Le Camus, his secretary, saying:

"This is amusing, eh? It is how they keep little girls out of mischief here. La, la! Who would be a girl? And that is *papa*, eh?" He went nearer to Mr. Patterson's portrait. "That is a fine man, evidently, a man who knows his own mind. We will remember all this, Le Camus. We will have much to tell our friends when we return. Someone comes."

It was Mrs. Patterson, whose stiff silk dress came whispering after her down the stairs. She knew almost no French, and was not a little dismayed at having been forced to come down first and alone. But she knew well enough how to play the hostess.

"Now," she said, when introductions had been made, "you shall have refreshments." She pulled the bell-rope. "I hope you are well entertained here in Baltimore. It is a beautiful city, is it not? I am sure there are few finer anywhere. You see I am a true Baltimorean, and I love my home."

She addressed herself to Jerome, for the other two

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gentlemen spoke little English. She presently turned to them and said, "I only wish I could speak to you. *Je ne parle pas français, messieurs.* I am sorry. But my daughter speaks very good French, very good indeed. Do you not think so, Mr. Bonaparte?"

"But she speak like an angel!" the young man assured her. "She is an angel. She is clever. She is beautiful. I make you my compliments, madame, that you have a so charming daughter. Last night she is the most beautiful of all. Everywhere she go I think she must be so."

"*Elle est vraiment exquisite!*" murmured Le Camus. He was a Creole, with a yellowish complexion and a beard that needed very frequent shaving.

Mrs. Patterson did not take to him at all. Dr. Garnier she thought far more agreeable-looking, and she smiled across at him from time to time in a friendly way, though a little nervously. Why didn't Elizabeth come? She had been dressed and ready for nearly an hour. Why didn't Robert or William come? She felt quite incapable of entertaining three strange Frenchmen. Ah, the refreshments at last. Now there was something for her to do.

Jerome praised the food in Baltimore; the fish, the terrapin, the oysters; they were wonderful. But wonderful. "My friend, Dr. Garnier," he said, "is a great gourmet. He is so happy here, he would stay always, just to eat. That is so, eh, Garnier?"

He chattered on, in his difficult English, putting Mrs. Patterson more at her ease, though he was constantly looking towards the stairs. "Ah," he said at last, "here is your daughter."

Elizabeth came slowly into the room, without haste,

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without eagerness. She smiled her quick, self-possessed little smile at each one of them, shaking hands with Jerome and bowing to his two companions, disliking Le Camus at sight, and guessing that his hand, which she preferred not to touch, would be as cold as a frog.

"A pair of sycophants," she thought, and decided that she must be on her guard with them, but that, however little she might like them, it would be wise to obtain their liking.

The visitors had been there just over half an hour when Mr. Patterson returned, and with him Robert. Mr. Patterson sat down beside his wife and gave Jerome some keen and appraising glances from under his eyebrows. Elizabeth looked at her father with some pride. He was a father to have; he looked so solid, so much a master of circumstances, so *right*.

"I hear, sir," said Jerome to him, "that you know Martinique. Me, I have been on duty there with my ship."

"I know it very well indeed," said Mr. Patterson. "A very interesting island, though I cannot say I would choose to live there."

Jerome agreed that it was not a place in which to live.

"My sister-in-law, Josephine, she is born in Martinique," he said. "She is from a family call De la Pagerie."

Mr. Patterson said he had not had the good fortune to meet them.

"We hear," he said, "that the First Consul's lady is as good as she is beautiful."

"She is very well, my sister-in-law," said Jerome.

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"*Elle est toujours fort gentil pour moi.* She is good to me. We are good friends."

Mrs. Patterson said she understood that Mr. Bonaparte was one of a large family.

"*Mon Dieu, oui!*" said Jerome, laughing. He began to count on his fingers. "There is me. There is Caroline. There is *la jolie Paulette*, there is Elise, there is Louis, there is Lucien, there is my big brother Napoleon, and there is Joseph. One sister she is dead. But that is not so big a family as yours, madame."

With a faint look of shame, Mrs. Patterson agreed that hers was a very large family indeed. "Eleven of them," she said a little apologetically, and as Dr. Garnier leaned forward, as if he were not sure he had heard, she turned to him and said, "Eleven. *Onze.*"

His eyebrows shot up. "*Onze,*" he said. "*Tiens, tiens, c'est magnifique! Mes compliments, madame.*"

"Everyone," said Mr. Patterson to Jerome, "speaks most admiringly of your mother. She must be a very remarkable woman."

"*Maman,*" said Jerome, and he spoke with enthusiasm, "ah, there is no one like her. To each one of us she is best friend of all."

"He speaks like a good son and brother," thought Mr. Patterson, and was prepared to like the young man, for he placed domestic feelings very high, and domestic concord. Loyalty to God, loyalty to one's family, loyalty to the State; these were the three imperatives. Those who were truly loyal to the family would wish also to be loyal to God and State. Soon this Mr. or Captain Bonaparte (some called him one and some the other) would be returning to his own country, where great events were taking place, and meanwhile it could

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do no harm to show him some civility. So he invited him and his two friends to go to a play at the New Theatre in Holliday Street the following week, an invitation that was very promptly accepted.

The visit proceeded along conventional lines. Conversation was kept flowing, refreshments were taken, likes and dislikes were exchanged, opinions asked and given, and nothing much happened except that the love-affair between Jerome and Elizabeth was mysteriously advanced, and their mutual approval confirmed and strengthened. Jerome said to himself that he could gaze upon that face for a thousand, thousand years, and never tire of its perfection. He looked closely, deliberately for some tiny flaw, but there was none. Those lips that, when not smiling, closed so firmly, with such decision, tempted him almost beyond endurance; lips, he was certain, that had never been kissed by a sure, expert lover. He would call again to-morrow without the others, and perhaps would have the good fortune to see her alone. Soon he might be coming and going as he pleased, soon he might be permitted to take her to dances, might be looked upon as a family friend—better yet, as a fiancé. He was pleased with them all, with Robert with his look of quiet distinction—a young man who might go far—with Mr. and Mrs. Patterson, with the house and its appointments. He was in America—he still found it hard to believe—and this was one of its prominent families. It was all novel, exciting, interesting. He longed to make love—as he knew he could make love—to this enchanting girl, to kiss her and be kissed by her. “It will not be long,” he thought, “it will not be long.”

Just before they left he contrived to whisper in her

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ear, while the rest were looking at a miniature, "I come to-morrow, alone. I must see you alone. I come at four. *Ma belle Élise, ma belle Élise!*"

She nodded, threw him a brief smile, and said nothing.

When they had gone and the family were discussing the visit, her head was full of plans for the wedding. No less a person than the Reverend Bishop Carroll, the newly made Bishop of Baltimore and the first Catholic Bishop of America, should marry them. No one else was worthy. She would invite the Brown girls, perhaps, to be her bridesmaids. She would dress with great simplicity, but in a dress so fine and delicate that it would be talked about in Baltimore for years. Jerome would certainly wear some uniform that he was keeping for great occasions. She would be the most envied girl in America. All Europe would hear of her—even the great Napoleon Bonaparte would interest himself in her. "My sister-to-be, Elizabeth Patterson." . . . "Our American sister-in-law, the Baltimore belle."

"Betsy," said her father, standing with his back to the fire-place, "you have much to thank your family for. A good education isn't every girl's lot, and I declare, you can chatter French like a French girl. I listened to you, talking with that doctor fellow. It was first rate."

"I would have contrived to learn French even if you had forbidden it," said the young woman, but with a smile.

"Tut, tut! Ungrateful little wretch. You'd have done nothing of the sort. Never a thank-you do your mother and I get for all we do for you."

"People who bring children into the world," she

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retorted, "must expect to occupy themselves with them. It's the very least they can do. If I ever have a family—which God forbid—I hope I shall do my duty by them."

Her parents looked at her and then at each other. Mr. Patterson flourished a handkerchief and turned to Robert. He could only defeat Elizabeth if he lost his temper with her and sent her to her room.

"You had better see to the theatre tickets, Robert," he said. "It's 'Love in a Village' next week, with something shorter to follow. 'Who is the Dupe?' I think. Send Giles to get them, if you wish, but see that they're correct and for the right evening. There'll be your mother and myself, and you and William and Betsy and the three Frenchmen, and we'd better ask the Barneys and Mrs. Caton, and make a party of it. And when that's done, we need do nothing more."

Elizabeth spoke to no one about Jerome's proposed visit the next afternoon, and had some difficulty in finding an excuse to stay at home and let her mother go out without her, so pleaded a bad headache. To John and George, who might prove the greatest nuisances if they were about the place, she gave some money, and sent them out to buy candies, knowing that once they were safely out of the house with something to spend, they would find so much to do that it would be late afternoon before they returned. She persuaded Aunt Caroline to keep the smaller children out of the way on the plea that the noise they made drove her nearly distracted and was bad for her head. And as soon as the house was quiet she arranged herself on the couch in the drawing-room, took up a book of poems and waited.

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Fortune smiled upon all her little plans, and as soon as Jerome, in yet another uniform, was shown into the room and the door closed behind him, he was on his knees by the couch before she could rise from it.

"Alone! Oh, what happiness! Oh, Elise, Elise! "

Finding her thus unprotected, he made the most of an opportunity he had hardly dared to hope for. Her cool self-possession only added to his passion, and under the very eyes of Mr. Patterson's portrait he made love to her with such impetuosity, such ardour, that she came near to regretting her boldness. But a sharp word or two would surely bring him to his senses.

"This will not do," she said, averting her face from his too-warm kisses. "In America, a courtship must be discreet. Please, please don't make me regret that I trusted you."

But once having kissed her, it seemed impossible to stop, until he was almost alarmed by the violence of his own feelings.

"Elise! Elise! Say those words I must hear. Those words I die to hear. Say you love me. Say it! Elise, oh, Elise! Only say it! "

"Be calm, be calm. We are not in the middle of a desert. Jerome, *soyez sage, je vous prie!* "

"Say those words, then. I must hear them, or I go mad. Say them, and I swear I will be calm."

She relaxed a little in his arms. She ran her fingers through his thick, dark hair.

"I love you, Jerome."

"In French, in French! "

"*Je vous aime.*"

"Better than that. It is not enough. Quickly, quickly! "

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"Je t'aime."

"Ah! What happiness! From these lips! And you will marry me? You will belong to me? Promise, promise! "

Oh, triumph unbelievable, too great to be realized yet!

"I will marry you. I will belong to you."

"Dieu! Say that again. Never stop saying it. Kiss me again. Never stop kissing me! So beautiful, and mine, mine. You belong to me, Jerome. And I am yours. Elise, Elise! "

She kissed him again, more warmly than before, and then struggled out of his arms, flushed and half frightened.

"Be calm, be calm, Jerome! My mother, or the servants, are sure to come in. Oh, see what you have done! "

A little rip in her sleeve into which he put a probing finger, laughing as he did so.

"No one will see. Your maid will sew it. Elise, I will give you such beautiful things. I will send to France for them. You are like Pauline, who wears her clothes like a queen, but you are more beautiful. And they say that Paulette is the most beautiful woman in France."

Sweet, heady, exquisite flattery! It was as though, for the whole of her eighteen years, she had been starving for just this.

"But, Jerome, there are my parents to consider." (She had suddenly become the young miss.) "They may not give their consent. They may not wish me to marry a Frenchman and leave America. And there is your family too."

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"They do not matter. You hear me? They do not matter. I do what I like. Always I do what I like."

Oh, Europe, how close you are now! How near are your great cities, courts, pomps and splendours!

"You must go," she whispered at last. "You must go."

"Yes, I will go. It is better I go. But to-morrow I speak to your father. Or, best, I think I send someone to speak for me. That is more *convenable*. But now I go." He took her into his arms once more. "Think of me to-night, you understand? Think of me, dream of me. *Elise, tu es belle, tu es belle!*"

He went, but only after more kisses. She ran up to her room the moment he had left the house. How white and shaken he had looked! He loved her so much, so much! As for her, she was happy, elated beyond the power of words. To triumph so early, to be raised to such heights, and so young! She could hardly believe in her incredible good fortune. How she would be envied! The poor Brown girls, poor Mary Caton, who was there for them? Would they ever be able to forgive her for so outsoaring them? She enjoyed the luxury of pitying them because she was so soon to leave them far behind.

Spain was represented in the United States by the Marquis d'Yrujo, a somewhat enigmatic gentleman whom Jerome, who made friends quickly, had met in Washington. As d'Yrujo happened to be in Baltimore at that moment, he selected him as his ambassador, and requested him to go to Mr. Patterson and make a formal request for his daughter's hand.

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D'Yrujo had doubts (and expressed them) as to the wisdom of the proposed marriage, for he had long ago made a fairly just estimate of the character of Napoleon, and so foresaw difficulties, but Jerome would not listen to him, and said that if he did not act for him, someone else would. So d'Yrujo went, and astonished Jerome by returning with a firm but courteous refusal from Mr. Patterson.

Surprised though he was, he had no intention of taking Mr. Patterson's "No" as final, so he called upon him himself and ably pleaded his own cause. The result was the same. Mr. Patterson remained polite, but obdurate. He then sent word to Elizabeth that her father was unaccountably prejudiced against him and against the marriage, and at once the fat was in the fire.

Elizabeth was very angry, and, she believed, rightly angry. Her father was unreasonable, unkind, obstructive. She told him so, and he managed to keep his temper, but refused to alter his decision. Then began much struggle and discord. They wanted to marry at once, did they? Then want must be their master. He knew nothing about the young man. What were the views of his family? Wasn't it a fact that in France a young man might not marry without the consent of his guardians? He had heard so. And even supposing that they were to give their consent, he scoffed at the idea of such a marriage leading to permanent happiness. He didn't want a Frenchman for his daughter. He wanted a good, honest, self-reliant American, someone he knew all about. The thing was impossible, out of the question.

Mrs. Patterson, when she heard his verdict, burst into

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tears, partly with pity for her daughter, partly with relief that she was not to leave them for ever. But she felt obliged, nevertheless, to point out to him the advantages to Elizabeth of such a marriage. These Mr. Patterson thought nothing of.

"You women care too much for society and courts and falderals. Why should our Betsy marry a French popinjay who frips himself out in a new uniform every day? A vain, silly young man, in my opinion, and the sooner he takes himself off to his own country, where he belongs, the better I shall be pleased."

Elizabeth came into the room just in time to hear the last part of this sentence. She saw that her mother had been crying, and was encouraged by the sight. She at least was on her side. She had never feared her father, and she flouted him now as if he had no right of authority over her whatsoever.

"Provided he takes me with him," she said, "I don't mind how soon he leaves this country."

"He will not take you with him," Mr. Patterson said. His face was very red; his big bandanna handkerchief hung half-way out of the pocket of his tail coat, and his feet were planted wide apart. He was ready to do battle. "He will not take you with him. You will not marry him. I have said so, and what I say I mean. I will not have that young man as a son-in-law. I've a good mind to send you away into the country, or down to Virginia, until he goes."

"When Jerome goes," she said, facing her father very coolly, "I go with him. And what *I* say I mean, too. I would rather be the wife of Jerome Bonaparte for an hour than the wife of any other man for life."

"You're talking nonsense. You're not old enough to

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know what is best for you. Now, not another word or I'll send you to your room. The idea is crazy, crazy, and I'll hear no more of it."

"Yes, you will, father," Elizabeth said, facing him, her hands clenched at her sides, "yes, indeed you will. A great deal more of it."

"Betsy!" Her mother sent her warning glances. Why didn't the child try to conciliate her father, humour him, instead of taking everything into her own hands, and forcing the issue? Why not plead with him? But that was not Elizabeth's habit. Mrs. Patterson was torn between selfish and generous love. If Betsy got her way and married this Mr. Bonaparte and went with him to France, she would be lost to them for ever, for what delicate woman who once crossed the ocean would ever willingly cross it again? On the other hand, it would break her heart to see the child unhappy, and this was an astonishing and brilliant marriage for their daughter to make. From her presently came the suggestion that perhaps Mr. Bonaparte might consent to settle down in America and make it his home, a suggestion Mr. Patterson seemed at least prepared to consider, provided the young couple would wait six months and obtain the approval of Jerome's family.

But Jerome, who called to see Mr. Patterson day after day, said that six months was an eternity; that it might be necessary for him to return to France any day, and as for his family, there was no opposition to be feared from them. Of course they would consent to his marriage. They would wish him every happiness. He was his brother's favourite, almost his mother's favourite. His wife would be welcomed with open

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arms by all of them and treated like a sister. She had only to show herself.

"You are a minor," Mr. Patterson kept repeating, "and you depend on your brother, the First Consul. Obtain his consent, and then we shall see."

That, the young people argued, would take months, possibly six months, or even more. Why should they wait? Everyone knew of their happiness now, everywhere they went people congratulated them and wished them joy. The whole of Baltimore looked on the marriage as a foregone conclusion. They were treated already as an engaged couple. And there was not the slightest reason to suppose that the consent of Jerome's family would be withheld.

"You must wait, nevertheless, until it comes."

"But," cried Elizabeth, "Jerome may have to go back to France before that."

"Which would be the best solution," Mr. Patterson said, "of the whole matter."

"I have told you before, sir," she cried, her eyes flashing angrily, "that if Jerome goes, I go with him."

Seeing that another storm was about to break Mrs. Patterson sprang up from her chair and stood between father and daughter.

"William, William, we are getting nowhere. Mr. Bonaparte, cannot a compromise be made? If you would only promise to stay in America, surely . . ."

Mr. Patterson laid a hand on her shoulder.

"I think, my dear, that you must leave all this to me. Your affection and your sentiment are apt to get the better of your judgment."

"Which will never be the case with you!" cried Elizabeth, her self-control suddenly going. "You care

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nothing for my happiness or advancement. Nothing. You don't want me to be happy. You never did. You delight in making me suffer." And she rushed from the room. Whereupon Jerome kissed Mrs. Patterson's hand and bid Mr. Patterson good-day. When he had gone, the poor woman burst into tears, a thing she had been doing very frequently of late, and Mr. Patterson took up his hat and stamped out of the house and down to his warehouse, angry and perturbed. He saw that there would be no peace in his home until this matter were settled.

If constant dropping can wear away stones, constant tears and pleadings can wear down a man's resolution. or so Mrs. Patterson, now wholly on Elizabeth's side, believed. She put her own dreads out of her mind and thought only of the girl; and whenever the opportunity offered she made yet another attempt to break down Mr. Patterson's resistance. And Mr. Patterson, who adored his wife, weakened little by little, worn out by her entreaties, until one day, feeling that he could endure it no longer, he cried out in utter exasperation and weariness:

"Do as you please! Do as you please! I cannot have the peace of my home ruined in this way. If Betsy wishes to risk her whole future by marrying this fellow, she may. I am sick to death of her ingratitude. I wash my hands of it all. They must do as they please."

This reluctant and painful consent was quite good enough for the young couple, who, overflowing with joy, at once made a formal announcement to their friends and applied for a licence, hoping to be married in October. Jerome sent to France for a magnificent

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trousseau for his bride, for though it would not reach her until long after the wedding, he wished her to have all the lovely things he could procure for her. And thinking that it might be wise to warn the restive and suspicious Pichon, from whom he would soon be wanting money, he hurried to Washington to see him and to pay his respects to President Jefferson, whom he had omitted to call upon when he was there before. At the same time he paid a visit to Mrs. Patterson's brother-in-law, General Smith, the Senator, whose delight when he heard that his young niece was engaged to the brother of the First Consul was extreme.

In fact nothing could better have suited General Smith's plans, for he had long cherished the hope of being made American Minister to France in the place of General Livingstone, who was soon to retire. Now the strings seemed to have been placed in his hands, and it was only necessary to pull them very gently. He took Jerome into his house and into his heart, and could not do enough to make his stay a pleasant one.

President Jefferson entertained the young man at a dinner at the White House, and was most favourably impressed by his appearance and behaviour. But Pichon was deeply worried and distressed, for Jerome had told him only the night before the White House dinner, that he was going to be married to Miss Patterson in nine days. In a veritable panic, for he feared and dreaded Napoleon's anger, poor Pichon at once wrote letters to Talleyrand, and to Decrès, the French Minister of Marine, and then consulted his French law books, to confirm what he already knew: that a young man under twenty-five was not permitted to

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marry without the consent of his parents or guardians.

Here was a pretty situation, and one which might easily lose him his position. As soon as Jerome was on his way back to Baltimore, he wrote him a formal letter, stating the legal objections to his marriage, and sent one at the same time to Mr. Patterson, and yet another to M. Débécourt, the French Consul in Baltimore.

"I have done what I can," he said to a colleague, when these letters were dispatched by special messenger. "If I fail, well, still I have done what I can. But that young man is mad. He is mad."

"He is in love," said his colleague. "*Voilà tout.*"

The result of one of M. Pichon's letters was that M. Débécourt promptly called on Mr. Patterson and explained the situation to him still further. Mr. Patterson received him in a very much perturbed state, for he had that very same morning been sent an anonymous letter from the usual "Well-wisher", warning him, amongst other things, that Jerome was "the most profligate young man of his age"; that he was a "destroyer of others' happiness", and that he would certainly turn his daughter off, and "laugh at her credulity".

"I withdraw my consent to the marriage," Mr. Patterson told the Consul. "I never agreed to it willingly. I now withdraw it absolutely. You may tell M. Pichon that it will not take place."

He sent for Robert and William, who agreed with him that, in the circumstances, there was nothing else to be done, and he then sent them away, and asked Mrs. Patterson and Elizabeth to come into the drawing-room. They were busy upstairs with a sewing-woman, and

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Mrs. Patterson came down with a bit of white bridal lace in her hands.

One look at his face told them that trouble was in the air.

"I have withdrawn my consent to the marriage," he announced, whereupon he showed them the two letters he had received that morning, and related to them what M. Débecourt had said. The two ladies were somewhat perturbed, but were inclined, on the whole, to make little of these obstacles.

He found that they looked upon Pichon as a fussy and stupid interferer, and were disposed to laugh at the anonymous letter.

"Someone," said Elizabeth, "is playing a joke on you. I am certain of that."

He brushed this aside.

"Let there be no arguments," said Mr. Patterson. "Let there be no arguments. My mind is made up."

"But, William . . ."

"My mind is made up!" It was an angry crescendo. They saw, with sinking hearts, that he meant what he said. "You, Betsy, will go with your mother to Virginia, to-morrow, for a lengthy stay. You may visit the Randolphs, or take lodgings, I don't care which. But go you shall. And let there be an end to all this. An end, do you understand? I have said my last word on this subject."

So he thought; and the two ladies were forced to endure an unwilling exile in Virginia, as guests of the Randolphs. Both left the house in South Street in tears. The younger children wept, the servants wept. But they were packed off. There was no help for it. Jerome tried again and again to see Mr. Patterson, but without

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success. "You are no longer engaged to my daughter," Mr. Patterson had written. "The marriage will not take place."

Jerome regarded this as due to the unwarranted interference of the Consul-General, and was furious with him. Indeed his anger almost outweighed his grief. To Le Camus and Garnier, he called Pichon every name he could think of; but the fact remained that as long as he stayed in America he must look to him for money. In the end he wrote him a formal letter to the effect that the match was now broken off without dishonour to himself, then gathered his little suite about him, gave the monkey to the youngest of the Pascault girls, who greatly admired it, and went to New York.

The trip to Virginia was not, from any point of view, a success. Elizabeth could imagine only too well the gaiety that would be occasioned by Jerome's visit to New York; a visit they had hoped to make together, and on their honeymoon. She could picture the fuss that would be made, the parties that would be given, the adulation and admiration he would receive, especially from the ladies of that city. And she knew that Jerome loved admiration. She was in despair, and the Randolphs had as guest a weeping, disconsolate, bitter-tongued girl and her anxious and no less tearful mother. The spirits of the household were sadly lowered, and pleasure there was none. Everyone took Elizabeth's part, including the servants, and letters reached Mr. Patterson from the Randolph family (but not from young James Randolph, who had always been in love with Elizabeth, and now, unable to witness her misery, had gone off on a hunting trip)—that not only his daughter but his wife as well would surely fall ill

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or go into a decline if something were not done. From every side, in fact, he received reproaches and remonstrances, for the affair had touched the romance-loving hearts of the Baltimoreans, and they felt they had been cheated out of its proper fulfilment.

Mrs. Patterson herself wrote :

I will not answer for our Betsy's life if you are determined on your present course. She is paler than a ghost, never laughs or smiles, and eats nothing at all. As for me, I would rather have a live Mrs. Bonaparte than a dead Betsy Patterson, which indeed I fear we may soon see, and if you have the same preference I implore you to let us return and to give your consent to the marriage, for I can plainly perceive that all will end in disaster if you do not. Which is the constant fear of

Your devoted wife,

DORCAS PATTERSON.

Neither did Mr. Patterson wish for a dead daughter, and, genuinely alarmed, he now began to search for excuses for a change of front. Had he not been needlessly assuming that the Bonaparte family might find reasons to object to the match? What reasons could there possibly be? He and his family were everywhere respected and looked up to; he was on very friendly terms with the President. He was, besides, a man of means, a merchant and a banker, and if Jerome's family wished to follow the French custom, could provide his daughter with a satisfactory dowry. He could really see no grounds for imagining that the Bonapartes, who had risen from very humble circumstances, could wish

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for a better match for the youngest son and brother. If, after all the warnings he had received, he were still to give his consent, he would be running a certain risk, it was true, but he had never been a man to refuse to take justifiable risks, and if his daughter's whole happiness, even her life, were at stake, justifiable the risk undoubtedly was.

He sent for them, therefore, and they returned without an instant's delay. He was shocked at the sight of his wife's face, but his daughter's was even worse. She had deliberately refrained, it was true, from eating more than was necessary to keep life in her body, and with her heavy, swollen eyelids and her look of utter dejection and misery, he could scarcely believe her to be the same girl. Being a just, affectionate and kindly man he could not see that he had any right to go further in the matter, and as Jerome returned from New York at about this time—for the young couple had contrived to keep up a correspondence unknown to him—he gave them his blessing sadly enough.

The joy of these two determined and unmanageable lovers was touching to see. Elizabeth regained her normal looks and health in the space of a week, and lost no time in spreading the good news among her friends. All now seemed smiling enough, particularly as Pichon, believing that the marriage project was completely abandoned, sent Jerome a thousand dollars and promised more.

General Smith, in Washington, heard the good news with delight, and found it hard to obey the young couple's strict injunction to say nothing to the Consul-General. He already saw himself in Paris, and connected by marriage to the great First Consul. Nothing

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could have been more satisfactory. Meanwhile, in Baltimore, plans for the marriage went forward again, the date was set for Christmas Eve, and the Reverend Bishop Carroll, long ago chosen by Elizabeth when the marriage was no more than a dream, agreed to officiate. And the Brown girls, when asked to be bridesmaids, rapturously consented.

An unusually early winter had set in. Much snow fell in late November, and all through December the roads were full of sleighs and musical with bells. Jerome had brought with him, among a hundred other fanciful and unnecessary objects, a sleigh like no sleigh that had ever before been seen in America. He had never spoken of it to Elizabeth, intending it as a surprise. One day, after a heavy snowfall, he said to her as he was leaving the house:

"I come to-morrow, at twelve o'clock in the morning, to make you a surprise. Please be ready to go out with me. I do not tell you more. *C'est entendu, ma belle Élise?*"

"*Entendu,*" she replied, full of eagerness and curiosity. What a delightful lover, what a romantic lover, he was! Always the unexpected gift, the unlooked-for treat. Every day, now, was an enchantment. She could scarcely believe that it was not all a dream, so perfect was it, so precisely as she would have had it. What had he thought of for to-morrow? It was impossible to guess. Something, it was certain, that no one but Jerome would have thought of. She could hardly wait for the time to come.

At twelve o'clock exactly, with a gay tinkling of musical little bells, he drove to the door of the house, and at the sound, everyone rushed to look out. They

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saw an astonishing sight. Jerome, dressed in a uniform which he later explained was that of a captain in the Berchiny Hussars, sprang out of a sleigh—drawn tandem fashion by two horses—such as might have come straight out of a fairy-tale.

It was made in the shape of a lion, whose legs, somewhat extended to the fore and the rear, were fastened to curved runners. Its back was hollowed out to provide space for two small seats, one behind the other. The creature's eyes were made of red glass, its fierce mouth was open in a snarl which revealed its great red tongue and yellow teeth, and its flowing, gilded mane was cunningly carved to look as though the wind were rushing through it. It was enough to make the children scream with delight; and the servants so far forgot themselves as to crowd round, exclaiming, "Fo' de Lawd's sake! Fo' de good Lawd's sake!" until Elizabeth, coming out of the house charmingly furred and shawled, dismissed them to their work. As the two impatient horses stood waiting, they tossed their heads and pawed the snow as though in fear of the monster at their heels.

"You like it? Yes?" asked Jerome, looking, in his splendid uniform, like something out of a fairy-tale himself. "You are please?"

"Pleased? I'm enchanted. It's the most wonderful thing I ever saw. Oh, Jerome, is it really for me? Are we going out in it? Oh, how delightful!"

She was charmed beyond words by this unique conveyance, so bizarre and so beyond anything she could have anticipated. She patted the lion's mane, admired the fierce red eyes, and told the excited children that if they were very good they might each be taken for a ride one day. Then, while Giles held the leader's

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head, she sprang lightly in, and Jerome, who had not let go the reins, followed her. A whip cracked and they were away, tossing the snow from their swift runners, and filling the air with the cold, sweet music of the bells.

This was heaven! To flash past the Barneys' house, past the Catons'; to see the faces of friends pressed against the windows, and to wave gaily to them; to see the people in the streets stop and stare as they flew by; to sit behind Jerome's slim, taut, uniformed back, and sometimes, when they turned a corner very fast, to hold him tightly about the waist; all this was bliss, bliss! She was envied, and envy was sweet. Her happiness was absolute, there was nothing left to wish for; nothing that she did not already possess, or could not look forward to with confidence.

And though it was annoying and painful to be hit in the face by a hard snowball—worse, there was a stone in it—thrown by some mischievous boys, it was satisfactory to see Jerome pull in the horses at once, toss her the reins, and go in angry pursuit of the offender; and catch him and turn him up and administer a spanking that he would remember for many a day. There was a cut under her eye, and he attended to it very gently. She hoped it would have healed and vanished before her wedding-day.



CHAPTER V

MEANWHILE, poor M. Pichon was writing to France that the unfortunate project of Citizen Jerome Bonaparte's marriage was now, happily, abandoned. He took to himself some credit for this, and stated precisely what part he had played in persuading both Citizen Bonaparte himself, and Mr. Patterson and his family, that it was impracticable.

Ever since the arrival in the United States of the First Consul's youngest brother, he had felt—and not without cause—that his duties and responsibilities had been doubled. Much of his time had been spent in the writing of letters concerning him; first announcing his arrival, then describing the efforts he had made to persuade him to take the first French ship back to France, then informing the authorities of his entanglement, and then, later, of its breaking off. He had also kept them informed of all the moneys that had passed through his hands and into those of Citizen Bonaparte. He wrote lengthily and conscientiously to Talleyrand and Decrès, in France, and to Dëbécourt, and then Sotin, in Baltimore. He had, besides, written a great number of letters—most of them ignored—to Jerome himself, advising him as to his conduct while in America, and warning him against certain friends that he had made there. He strongly disapproved of Commodore Barney, for one. "It is difficult for you, a stranger," he wrote, "to judge whose society you may frequent without loss of prestige and whose you may not." A letter that called forth an indignant reply from

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Jerome. But now he felt he could breathe again. The danger was past.

Quite unaware, then, of what was taking place in Baltimore—for the young people wished for no further interference—he sent Jerome a further sum, four thousand dollars, in fact, which set him up very nicely and arrived just in time to add to the pleasures of the honeymoon. He had no sooner dispatched it than a letter came from Le Camus which roused the much-tried man to such a pitch of helpless fury that he could not refrain from throwing it on the floor and stamping on it.

Sir [Le Camus wrote], I have the honour to inform you, on behalf of M. Jerome Bonaparte, that his marriage to Miss Patterson was celebrated yesterday evening. He charges me to tell you that he is awaiting with impatience—[Why, oh, why had he not withheld that money twenty-four hours longer?]
—the four thousand dollars which you are sending him. His engagements are becoming pressing, and his household will soon be in need. He begs you, therefore, to be so good as to dispatch this sum to him as soon as possible.

It had happened. It was done. It was done, past recall, past undoing. "This will ruin me," thought M. Pichon, "it will ruin me." But there was no help for it. The worst had happened, the marriage had taken place. He had been fooled, hoodwinked. He would probably be recalled to France and disgraced. He would have to give up his pleasant home in Georgetown, his pleasant life in America, his career, his hopes for the future. They had hoodwinked him.

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This fact, which caused such a tempest in the breast of poor Pichon, delighted the triumphant pair in Baltimore. The wedding had gone off perfectly, without a hitch. It took place at the Pattersons' home, on Christmas Eve, as planned, and it was the gayest, happiest, prettiest wedding ever seen in Baltimore. The good Bishop smiled on them and pronounced the blessing with more than his usual heartiness and benevolence. Everyone was there who should have been there. M. Sotin, who, luckily for the young couple, had just succeeded the more cautious M. Débécourt as Consul, had readily consented to come (believing that M. Pichon had ceased to interest himself actively in the marriage), so that France was represented by him, by Alexandre Le Camus and by a Monsieur and Madame Lallemand, with whom the Patterson family were friendly. The Mayor of Baltimore was there, and all the most prominent families of the town had dressed themselves in their best and flocked to the ceremony. It was a great event in the lives of the Patterson children, who were much in evidence—to Elizabeth's chagrin—and wild with excitement. Mr. Patterson was grave, studiously polite, but inwardly troubled, and, as he told his old friend, Judge Chase, unreconciled; while Mrs. Patterson's emotions ranged from high elation to grave anxiety; an anxiety, however, that was chiefly for the success of the wedding as a wedding, for she had no time for gloomy forecasts.

Jerome was magnificent. His purple satin coat, laced with gold, had long tails which fell nearly to his heels and were lined with white satin. White satin, too, were his knee-breeches and his shoes, and his shoe-buckles were of diamonds. To complete the

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picture he had returned to an earlier fashion and powdered his hair. He looked so extremely handsome that he stole from the bride some of the admiration that on such occasions is usually reserved for her. His face resembled, though in a softer, more youthful way, that of his famous brother. He had the same bold nose, short upper lip, thin mouth and full, rounded chin, and no one who had seen portraits of Napoleon could fail to trace the family likeness.

But Elizabeth, however splendid the groom, was quite able to hold her own, and looked exquisite enough in her finely embroidered, high-waisted gown of India muslin. It was, indeed, of a cobweb fineness, and was worn over a scanty and tightly fitting foundation of satin. ("I don't believe," whispered the ladies to one another, "that she's wearing *anything at all* underneath!") Arms, shoulders, breast were bare, and Le Camus was overheard to remark that he could have put all the clothing worn by the bride into his pocket. The effect, nevertheless, was simple, youthful, and wholly lovely, and to hide one's charms was by no means the fashion. Her only ornament was a small string of pearls given to her—a little sadly—by her father.

She was entirely happy. Everyone who was anyone in Baltimore was there. She was kissed, toasted, made much of, envied. Sotin wrote innocently and enthusiastically of her to Pichon, the next day: "The young lady is really beautiful; she is spoken of as intelligent and well brought up. I hope very much that they will be happy." And the infatuated pair, with a vast amount of luggage, but with only one attendant apiece—the inevitable Le Camus, Garnier and Meyronnet

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were temporarily abandoned—set off upon their honeymoon.

To the distracted Pichon was left the task of sending the news of the marriage to Talleyrand, in Paris, who, in his turn, was to inform Napoleon. He took great pains to clear himself of all responsibility, of all complicity in the affair, adding that Mr. Patterson, the young woman's father, had also strongly opposed the match, but that the young people had shown such determination that consent had to be given "in order to avoid a scandal".

The happy couple, however, had the grace to feel guilty about M. Pichon, and besides, they knew they would have to look to him for money.

"How are we to make our peace with him?" Elizabeth asked, as they jolted southwards over the bad roads in the family coach, the luggage following behind.

"Oho!" laughed Jerome. "I am not afraid of Pichon. We will pay him a visit. If he has us to stay in his house as his *invités*, he can no longer be angry with us. It is quite simple. We will go to Georgetown."

So they went to Georgetown, a pleasant suburb of Washington much frequented by the diplomats and legislators, visited the much-troubled man and made their peace with him. Then they turned northwards again and went to Homestead, one of Mr. Patterson's estates, which was at their disposal, and after a stay of some weeks there, went south again to Washington, where Elizabeth's uncle, General Smith, gladly did everything he could to make their stay agreeable.

They dined at the White House with President Jefferson, and there met, one evening, an unusual sort

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of young man, an Irishman named Tom Moore, a singer and poet, who was on his way home from Bermuda. They did not know it, but the sight of them immensely tickled the young man's fancy, and he wrote home to his mother, in Ireland, that of all the curious sights he had seen while in America, none had seemed to him more curious than this young Mr. and Mrs. Bonaparte, with their airs and their pretensions. The young couple, on their side, thought him scarcely less curious, and Elizabeth was piqued by his refusal to pay her the compliments or the attention she was accustomed to receive.

But Mr. Patterson was still troubled and uneasy. After taking much thought, he discussed one day with Robert the propriety of sending him to France to find out from the Bonaparte family themselves what view they took of the marriage.

"I'll go with pleasure, sir," said Robert, "if you think I can be of use there."

"I do think so. You could take the First Consul a letter from the President—which I am sure he will willingly write—and one from Mr. Livingstone in Paris. They will carry some weight with him, I fancy. At present, he can know little of the family into which his brother has married. You had better see Madame Bonaparte, the mother, too, if you can, and as many of the family as you can get access to. I would rather send you than William. You can speak a little French, and you are more at your ease in society than he is."

"And when would you wish me to go?" asked Robert.

"As soon as either the *Erin* or the *Philadelphia* are

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ready to sail. That would be within the next two or three weeks, I imagine."

Elizabeth and Jerome, when informed of the plan, thought it a good one, though France seemed to them so far away and relatives so unimportant that they did not trouble themselves very much about it. It would be very pleasant for Robert to go abroad, they thought, and no doubt Jerome's family would be delighted to meet a member of the Patterson family.

"It is better that Robert should go than William," Elizabeth wrote to her father from Homestead, "for William might antagonize them, which Robert certainly will not."

She was not, however, greatly concerned. She was still too much absorbed in her own happiness, too much delighted with her own good fortune and success to concern herself with anything beyond immediate joys. She was learning, from his own lips, Jerome's version—somewhat softened for her ears—of his brief past life. It was like the most improbable, the most delightful of romances, beginning with the early, troubled years in Corsica with their dangers and alarms, the flight of the family to France to join Napoleon, and that amazing brother's rise to fame. Jerome told her of his devotion to Napoleon, and how he had wept and stormed, three years earlier, at sixteen, when his brother went off to fight the battle of Marengo and would not take him too; and how, when he returned victorious, he had sulked until the conqueror, to placate him, gave him the sword that he had worn. She learnt, little by little, of his youthful adventures and indiscretions. That he was precocious did not surprise her; she expected it of a French boy. That he had had

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love affairs since he was fifteen neither shocked nor disgusted her, though it was true that he made them sound more innocent than they were. She liked best of all to hear of days spent in the Tuileries with Hortense and Eugène de Beauharnais, and of the games and pranks they played. Next to Napoleon, she learnt, Jerome was fondest of his brother Louis. He was least fond, he declared, of his beautiful sister "Paulette", who had just been married to Prince Camillo Borghese. "There is nothing in her head but vanity and nonsense," he said. And Elizabeth was amused at the story of his absurd duel with young Davout while at the Academy, and saw the scar on his breast where Davout's bullet still lodged.

"This time Napoleon did not laugh when he heard. He made me go to sea. But he forgave me."

All stories of escapades seemed to end with Napoleon's forgiveness, so what had they to fear?

He described to her, gaily, laughingly, his life as an ensign in the Navy, and then as lieutenant; he told her of wild adventures on shore, especially at Nantes, in Brittany. "I think I never dare go back to that place!" But he did not laugh when he told her of the miseries and horrors of San Domingo.

"I wonder," she exclaimed, "at your good fortune in being alive."

"And me also, I wonder," he said, his gaiety returning, and he kissed the lovely little face.

While these two amused themselves and were happy, Robert sailed for Europe and reached Paris early in March. He had passed through London, and there had presented himself to James Monroe, the American Minister, and his family, and had obtained letters from

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Miss Monroe to Madame Louis Bonaparte and to Madam Campan (once Lady of the Bedchamber to Marie Antoinette, and afterwards head of the famous school for young ladies, and on very friendly terms with Napoleon). In Paris he at once got into touch with a Captain Bentalou, who had fought for America in the War of Independence, and had until lately been living in Baltimore; and Bentalou gladly agreed to act as his interpreter.

Letters from Robert now began to reach Baltimore by every boat that carried mails. His first meeting with a member of the Bonaparte family, he wrote, was with Lucien Bonaparte, who was himself in Napoleon's black books on account of his recent marriage to a lady of no political importance, by whom he had already a son, and to whom, according to rumour, he had promised marriage only in that event. He was living in Rome, and was paying only a brief visit to Paris. Robert found him exceedingly affable and his words highly encouraging, though in the circumstances he did not feel hopeful that he would be able to influence the First Consul.

Lucien had the Bonaparte trick of forcible expression, and Robert formed a fairly high opinion of his good sense.

"Tell Mr. Patterson," said Lucien to Captain Bentalou, "and let his father know, that our mother, myself, and the whole family with one voice—and as heartily as I do—approve of the match." He was not, of course, he hastened to say, speaking for Napoleon. "The Consul, it is true, does not for the present concur with us, but he is to be considered as isolated from the family. . . . I have also, by my late marriage, incurred his displeasure, so Jerome is not alone." He went on

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to say that in his opinion, Jerome's best course would be to take steps to become an American citizen and stay where he was. "His situation is much preferable to ours. We are yet in a tempestuous sea, and he is moored in an incomparably happier harbour."

"All very well," thought Robert, "and probably quite true, but not in the least what Jerome and Elizabeth want or expect."

Lucien suggested that Jerome might be given twenty thousand dollars a year if he remained in America, which would enable him to keep a town house in Baltimore and a place in the country as well. What more could any man wish? "We are even now," he said, "making arrangements to provide genteelly for him."

But would Jerome be content to stay in America? Would Elizabeth? Robert doubted it very much.

He then saw various other members of the family, and while he found them most friendly and most eager to welcome his sister *if all went well*, he easily detected an undercurrent of doubt. Napoleon said nothing, but everyone knew that he was very angry indeed. Robert tried again and again to obtain an interview with him, but was always told that it was impossible. So he waited and hoped. And then at last the great man spoke, and he spoke with the voice of Jove, and with all his thunders. He had not been in the least moved by President Jefferson's letter explaining that Mr. Patterson was president of the Bank of Baltimore and a man of great virtue and respectability, and that his lady was sister to the lady of General Smith. He quite ignored such evidences of local pride. He uttered his decrees at last, and they were as follows:

No money was to be advanced to Citizen Jerome.

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All captains of French vessels were prohibited from receiving on board the young person to whom the Citizen Jerome had connected himself. "She shall by no means come into France. . . . Should she arrive, she is not to be permitted to land, but is to be sent back immediately to the United States."

And he cited the case of Citizen Lucien Bonaparte, who, "obliged by his own folly to abandon the theatre of glory of his family, has exiled himself to Rome, where he becomes the simple spectator of the destinies of his august brother."

This was plain speaking, and Robert's heart sank. And now the two young people in Washington began to receive shock after shock. Decrès, the French Minister of Marine, himself wrote to Jerome urging him to return to France immediately, "as great events are preparing". The French Admiral, Willaumez, was in the Chesapeake with the *Poursuivante*, and he strongly urged Jerome to go aboard her and sail for France without delay.

Hard counsel to a young man but a few months married!

"They cannot, surely, have such a poor opinion of you as to imagine that you would listen to such advice and leave me behind," Elizabeth said.

And though Jerome had now come to the end of his financial resources and dared not ask Pichon for more, Mr. Patterson could still be counted upon to help, and the pair presently set off on a tour of the northern and eastern states. Jerome considered that there was nothing to be done until he himself had heard from Napoleon—to whom he had not yet written—and had received his orders at first hand.

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They went, therefore, to New York, where they were much fêted and entertained. It was a memorable visit. The city itself, they decided, was not impressive, for though it was a lively, bustling sort of place, and was growing very fast, it still had badly paved streets where the pedestrian constantly found his way impeded by the pigs which rooted and grunted unmolested under his feet; the houses of the rich, they thought, were in too close contact with the miserable, tumble-down dwellings of the poor, and far too many of the large, important buildings that should have been substantially built of brick or stone, were made of wood—and sometimes painted to imitate stone. The shops, too, were disappointing. Goods were untidily displayed on stands on the pavements, and tumbled about by prospective customers. On the other hand, there were far more and far grander private coaches than there were in Baltimore, and far more life and fashion to be seen. Better music, too, and better theatres. Jerome had already made friends there during that earlier visit—he showed Elizabeth the house where he had lodged—and as everyone wanted to meet young Mr. Bonaparte and his lovely bride, their time was fully occupied with receptions, balls, theatres and soirées.

They had left New York far behind them and were in Albany when a letter reached Jerome from Decrès, telling him that the *Didon* would be in New York Harbour in June and that he must embark on her without delay. Very well, he told Elizabeth, he would go, but he would take her with him. Obediently and hopefully, they hurried back to New York.

The captain of the *Didon* had been so long at sea that he knew nothing of the First Consul's instructions; he

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knew of no reason, therefore, why he should not welcome Madame Bonaparte on board, and at once made preparations to sail. Mr. and Mrs. Patterson hastened up from Baltimore to bid the young people good-bye, and thought themselves fortunate to have got there in time. But hardly was the anchor raised before news came that the British frigates *Cambrian* and *Boston*, followed by a third frigate, the *Driver*, were in the mouth of the Hudson, and, fearing capture, Jerome resolved to abandon the idea of sailing until a more propitious moment. Elizabeth hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry. When they continued their tour, which they soon decided to do, she was not, for a time, in the best of spirits.

"Courage, little wife," said Jerome. "We will have better luck soon. Have no fear!"

He rarely spoke to her now in English. Under his tuition her French had improved so rapidly that she was able to speak fluently and correctly.

They went on to Niagara Falls and were delighted with its splendours, and on returning to New York, once more considered the problem of crossing the Atlantic. But though the *Didon* still waited in harbour, the *Cambrian*, the *Boston* and the *Driver* also waited off Sandy Hook. So that there was nothing to be done.

And then began a number of serio-comic attempts to sail for France, all of which were thwarted in one way or another. Soon the newspapers began to make jokes about it, and Jerome began to find the situation uncomfortable and even embarrassing. Then, some time after the *Didon* episode, word came from Washington that General Armstrong was about to set out to take the place of Mr. Livingstone as Minister to France—

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alas for General Smith's hopes!—and had agreed to take Elizabeth under his wing. Jerome, it was suggested, could still sail in the *Didon*, which had not yet left the harbour.

But either the young couple could not bear the thought of going separately, or they really made a mistake in the day, as they said they did. At any rate, they missed the boat (and perhaps their best opportunity), and General Armstrong sailed without Elizabeth.

"*Eh bien*," said Jerome, with easy philosophy. "We travel some more."

It was not until August that they heard news of the great event that had taken place in France in May. Napoleon, three months earlier, had been crowned Emperor!

Emperor! Jerome, all this time and without knowing it, had been brother to an Emperor! He was a Prince of the Blood, he was a Royal Highness! And Napoleon, Napoleon was now one of the greatest, indeed, he was perhaps *the* greatest man in the world.

What ambitious young pair could be expected to stay quietly in America when such dazzling prospects were dawning in Europe? They could talk of nothing, now, but that astonishing Coronation. They could think of nothing but the brilliant opportunities that must be theirs as soon as they should present themselves at the new Court.

"We must go to France," said Jerome, "as quickly as possible. We must see Napoleon. In the midst of all these rejoicings he will be more than ever inclined to forgive us. We must find a way."

It was all very well for Napoleon to send orders,

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through Decrès and Willaumez, that Jerome was to return to France in a French ship; the vigilance of the British made this peculiarly difficult. They were everywhere on the watch, and if he were only to be allowed to return under the French flag, Jerome, fretting, now, with eager impatience, foresaw that he might have to stay in America for months. They returned unhappily to Baltimore, but could settle down to nothing, so anxious, restless and excited were they. At last Mr. Patterson, in desperation and hardly knowing what to do for the best, resolved to hire a vessel for them himself. They jumped at his offer, and he thereupon took the matter into his own hands and arranged all the details of the journey. The *Philadelphia*, which he selected, was a stout little brig and fairly fast, and under the protection of the American flag, Jerome need not fear capture. Mr. Patterson was determined that Elizabeth should not go without a female companion, though she expressed her entire willingness to do so—rarely were members of her own sex necessary to Elizabeth's well-being—and in the end Miss Spear was prevailed upon to accompany her. It was no easy matter to persuade her, for she feared the trip, the ocean, and, above all, the wrath of Napoleon; but she at last consented, and on October 25th, after fresh good-byes—and fresh tears from Mrs. Patterson—they actually set sail.

"This time," said Elizabeth, with relief, and with a feeling of genuine gratitude towards her father for all his pains, "we are really on our way."

But she spoke too soon.

In Delaware Bay that night they ran into foul weather. Winds blew with almost hurricane violence,

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and they were tossed and turned about and blown out of their course, so that they were unable to double Cape Henlopen, as they had hoped to do, and gain the open sea. The Captain returned to the river, and anchored, to make the attempt again the next day. Once more they tried to beat their way around the Cape, but were blown back again, battered and leaking, and in no state, now, to attempt the crossing of the Atlantic, even if they should survive the shrieking night which presently descended upon them. Jerome never had greater cause to admire his wife's courage than he had during that night and the following day. While the little brig laboured and seemed about to fall apart, while they were encompassed by a yelling, nightmare tempest and the Captain and the sailors wore white and frightened faces, Elizabeth never despaired, never lost hope and showed no fear. Miss Spear spent most of the night on her knees, praying, and Jerome crept into his bunk at last and waited for death with a kind of bitter and angry resignation.

"Come here, to me," he said once to Elizabeth. "We will at least die together."

But Elizabeth had other things to do. She remained quite calm, kept an eye on the activities of Captain and crew, and even, at the very height of their peril, dared to demand what steps were being taken for their safety. She was defiant; she was resolved not to die.

In the grim light of that second dawn they were blown upon a sand-bank, not far from Lewistown. Miss Spear, when she felt the shuddering jar, shrieked and covered her face with her hands. They were within sight of the shore, now; they could even see a little throng of anxious and helpless spectators, and Eliza-

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beth's determination not to perish was much strengthened by the sight.

"You must lower a boat," she said to the Captain.

He looked at her as if she had gone crazy.

"Lower a boat in this storm, madam? You must be mad. And how do you propose to reach the boat, once it is lowered? "

They had to shout at each other above the horrid noise of the gale which roared through the rigging, and the loud dashing of the waves against the brig's defenceless hull. Spray was flung violently in their faces, and Elizabeth, who had followed the Captain on deck, had to cling tightly to the railing to keep herself from being blown away. Her skirts ballooned wildly about her, her bonnet tore at its strings.

"You must drop us in," she cried. "Drop me in first. I'll show you that it is possible. If we stay here we'll all perish together. Your ship's bound to sink, or be dashed to pieces. Lower a boat! "

The Captain flatly refused. He presently ignored her requests altogether, and busied himself yelling orders to his men and hurrying first to one part of the boat and then to the other. She followed him, relentlessly, struggling against the gale.

"I command you," she shouted at him, "to lower a boat. I command you."

"Are you the Captain of this brig, madam? " the furious man asked.

"Yes, for the moment I am. Wait, I'll go and fetch Mr. Bonaparte. He'll order you to do as I tell you."

She made her way below, and found Jerome still in his cabin.

"Stay here! " he ordered her, angrily. "What are

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you doing? If we must die, we will die together. Why do you leave me when you know you may never see me again? ”

But she had no time for last farewells, no pity for his white and miserable face. “ We’re not going to die. Come up and talk to the Captain. He’s a fool. If he would lower a boat we’d all be saved. We’re fast on a sand-bank, and we’re breaking up. Come and make him do as I tell him.”

Jerome, without much hope, went with her, and they staggered together to where the Captain stood by the main mast. He said he thought that the wind was veering, and if that were so, they might possibly be blown off the sand-bank again, and could then, perhaps, make for the nearest harbour.

“ How long will she stay afloat? ” Jerome shouted in his ear.

“ Can’t say. Maybe an hour or more. Maybe less.”

“ Then give orders for a boat to be lowered at once. We insist. We will take all responsibility.”

The Captain looked at him as if he, too, had taken leave of his senses.

“ Very well. If you say so. But she’ll be pounded to pieces.”

With great difficulty it was done. The little boat plunged and tossed and beat herself against the side of the brig.

“ Get Aunt Spear,” cried Elizabeth. “ Quickly! She must be made to jump too.”

“ But one of the sailors must jump in first,” said Jerome.

“ No,” she answered. “ The idea was mine. I said I’d show the Captain it could be done, and I will. You

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and he must drop me in, and then you must all follow me. If you don't the boat will sink under your feet."

They saw that she was determined. Miss Spear was brought up from below, her face grey with terror. Jerome and the Captain took Elizabeth by the arms, lifted her over the side, and when she gave the word, let go. A wave tossed the little boat aside, and instead of falling into it she fell into the water. Her skirts kept her afloat, and she pulled herself to the bow of the heaving boat to prevent herself being crushed between it and the brig. Miss Spear, when she saw what had happened, screamed loudly and covered her eyes, but Jerome at once leapt down, and, luckier than Elizabeth, landed safely in the boat and soon pulled her in beside him. Then Miss Spear, after a look heavenward and a prayer, came down, skirts and wraps whirling about her head. Two sailors followed suit, and the boat was then cast off and turned towards the shore. They reached it after twenty minutes' desperate pulling, and the eager watchers waded out and carried the ladies to land. The sailors then returned for the Captain and the rest of the crew, and after several trips all were safely brought in.

There was a pilot's house at no great distance, and they hurried to it, and found a hospitable family there who already had fires lighted and towels and dry clothes spread out for them. They dried themselves, and, warmed with hot drinks, were presently glowing and restored, and none at all the worse for their adventure.

The crew, as soon as they had rested, went valiantly out to the brig again and again, and managed to salvage most of their belongings before she foundered. When she was seen to be breaking up, Elizabeth said:

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"There, Captain, if we had trusted to you we would still have been aboard her, I suppose?"

The pilot's wife insisted on killing and roasting a goose for their dinner, and served it up with vegetables and apple sauce, and Elizabeth, being by this time quite ravenous, was as delighted as a child by the sight of this good meal. But her delight shocked and disgusted Miss Spear.

"You irreligious little wretch!" she cried. "How can you eat at such a moment? You ought to be on your knees thanking God for your deliverance."

"I consider," said Elizabeth, heaping her plate, "that I had a good deal to do with that myself."

Not only Elizabeth, but Jerome too, now that the danger was past, preferred to look upon the whole episode as an exciting adventure, and as a sign from Providence that they were to be watched over and preserved for a great destiny, even though they had lost overboard two thousand five hundred dollars of Mr. Patterson's money, which they presumed must have fallen out of Jerome's pocket when he jumped, and the passage money as well, which amounted to nearly four thousand!

They were alive and unharmed, and before them lay the future. What did a loss of several thousand dollars matter? Mr. Patterson was a rich man, and Jerome was the brother of an Emperor. They would try again. Elizabeth, dressed in the clothes the pilot's wife had lent her, gaily supervised the drying of her own, running out from time to time to see if the salt water had stained them, and at length reporting, with the utmost satisfaction, that she believed they could be made as good as new.

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Meanwhile they waited, knowing that their plight would soon be reported, for help to come to them. And it was not long in coming. The Governor of Delaware, who was the first to learn of the wreck, sent his carriage for them, with instructions that they were to make whatever use of it they pleased. So they took such of their belongings as they could pack in, and drove, in this conveyance, to Newcastle, where they found lodgings for themselves.

And now poor M. Pichon, who had been totally unaware of their departure (knowing of Napoleon's decree that his brother was to travel only in a French ship, he would certainly have tried to prevent it), hurried to their assistance as soon as he learnt of the disaster. He was surprised at nothing now; he was prepared for anything. His life was bound to be a worry to him, and a curse, until the happy day when Jerome should once more be restored to his own country. He was resigned, but it was the resignation of despair. When he found them in their Newcastle lodgings, the sight of his lugubrious face made both of them burst out laughing, and they were as merry as children over his discomfiture.

"Ah, Monsieur Pichon," cried Elizabeth, "pray don't look so miserable! Surely you are glad to see us alive and well instead of finding us a row of drowned corpses, as you might have done."

He escorted the little party back to Baltimore, where they had to take refuge again under the family roof. A somewhat humiliating circumstance for Elizabeth, for her mother, barely two weeks earlier, had given birth to her thirteenth child.

In November, yet another attempt was made. This

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time they tried to sail on the French armed frigate, *President*, which was anchored off Annapolis, but even as they went aboard her, Jerome said to Elizabeth, "I have no hope that we will succeed this time; still, we must try." The *President*, it was true, had safely brought over General Thurreau, the new French Minister to the United States, but to return again was a different matter. The young people were barely on board before His Majesty's frigate *Resolution* came and dropped anchor uncomfortably near, and Jerome and Elizabeth lost no time in asking to be put ashore. And this time, oddly enough, Elizabeth, who had shown such amazing courage aboard the *Philadelphia*, was badly frightened. The thought of capture, it seemed, was more than she could bear. They returned to Baltimore.

No further attempts were made that winter, and they presently settled down to a season of gaiety—for they were easily the most talked-of and the most sought-after young people in America—attended balls and parties and were often to be seen driving about the town and into the country in that astonishing sleigh of Jerome's. And soon it seemed that they had made up their minds not to worry any longer about their future. Providence would continue to interest itself in them, and to guide their fortunes.

But in March, Mr. Patterson grew really alarmed about their prospects. Jerome was still quite determined to return to France, and with Elizabeth, and as time went on his brother's anger against him, so Robert wrote, only increased.

"They may shoot him as a deserter if he stays away much longer," Mr. Patterson said to his wife.

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"They can't touch him as long as he stays here," she replied. And she still hoped against hope that the young couple would, in the end, decide to give up the thought of going to Europe, and settle down sensibly and contentedly in America.

"They're determined to go, and go they shall. Delay only makes matters worse. We'll have one more try, and this time I'll send them in one of my own ships. But," he added, "not a word to anyone. Not a word. It must be kept a strict secret."

It was at last decided, then, that they were to sail in the *Erin*, a brig belonging to Mr. Patterson, of which he was justly proud. Lisbon was chosen as their destination. Only the family's most intimate friends were informed of the proposed departure, and they were sworn to absolute secrecy. This time, however, Miss Spear firmly refused to go.

"I've had all the sea voyages I want," she said. "If you insist on my going, you'll have to take me by force; you'll have to gag me and bind me, for I'll go aboard that vessel in no other way."

So a Mrs. Anderson, a widow and an old acquaintance of the family, agreed to take her place. She was one of those women who are invariably called in when relatives and friends are ill, or dying, or in childbirth. She was helpful, experienced, had few or no private interests, and was invaluable in a sick-room, and she was flattered at being asked to go with such a distinguished little party.

William also accompanied them, for Mr. Patterson was by no means sanguine as to Napoleon's welcome, and thought that the presence of a brother might be helpful to Elizabeth. They took Dr. Garnier as well,

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as Elizabeth was now expecting a baby at no very distant date. Meyronnet, whom Jerome had sent to France to pave the way for his return, was still in Paris, but Le Camus was in Baltimore, and of course must accompany his master, for he had made himself Jerome's shadow, and had become quite indispensable to the young man. Elizabeth, who liked him no better now than at first, had many words with Jerome about him, but had to make the best of his society nevertheless. That he was ambitious, both for himself and for Jerome—or for himself through Jerome—she knew well enough. She could scarcely hide her mistrust of him, and she saw in his eyes, when he looked at her, only calculation and a veiled dislike.

This time, little but relief was felt by those they were leaving behind. So many barren attempts, so much worry and anxiety (and so much expense!), it was little wonder that family and friends gave sighs of thankfulness when the *Erin* actually sailed out of the harbour and was lost to view.

"I'm utterly worn out with it all!" cried poor Mrs. Patterson. But she wept silently into her pillow that night, for she was convinced that she would never see her Betsy again.

CHAPTER VI

THE voyage was tolerably calm, and was unmarred by any incident until they were three days out of Lisbon, when they met a French frigate which accosted them in a most warlike manner, ordered them to stop, and sent a shot across their bows. The *Erin* was one of the fastest boats on the Atlantic, and neither Jerome nor the Captain was disposed to stop and parley. They saw no reason for the frigate's interference, and felt no disposition to obey her commander's orders. They crowded on all sail, therefore, proceeded on their way, and soon left the frigate well beyond the horizon.

Elizabeth, during this rather alarming incident, showed her customary courage, but Mrs. Anderson was terrified. If this was what Europe was going to be like, why, oh, why had she consented to come? But they soon decided to regard it as a case of mistaken identity and to put it out of their minds. Apart from that, all had gone well enough. There had been a few rough days, it is true, when Elizabeth, who was not feeling her best in any case, was miserably sea-sick. Jerome wrote to his father-in-law (a letter that was taken back to America by another of Mr. Patterson's boats from Lisbon) to tell him this, adding, a trifle unfeelingly, "But you know as well as anybody that sea-sick has never killed nobody."

On the whole, the winds had been fair, and on April 8th they sighted the coast of Portugal, just three weeks after leaving Baltimore.

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When Elizabeth saw for the first time a bit of the coastline of that Europe for which she had longed ever since she could read a book, all her optimism flowed back to her. There was no reason to suppose that all would not go well. Indignant guardians had been softened and placated before now by the sight of the married pair's happiness, and why should it be imagined that Napoleon had not his human side, like other people?

For it so chanced that Robert's latest letter to his father, in which he summed up the situation created by his sister's marriage, did not reach Baltimore until after the *Erin* had sailed. This letter completely dashed the family's hopes, and darkened the whole outlook. Napoleon, Robert said, had threatened to throw Jerome into prison as soon as he arrived and keep him there until he should agree to repudiate his "so-called wife" and marry whomsoever should be chosen for him—a letter which threw Mr. Patterson into the blackest of tempers for several days.

But even if they had known of this threat, neither Jerome nor Elizabeth would have believed it, or would have remained in America because of it. Both were quite convinced that Elizabeth had only to show her lovely face for all serious opposition to vanish instantly. Her beauty was to be the trumpet note that would send the Jericho-walls of Napoleon's opposition tumbling down. In that they put all their trust.

So that although the trip had been tedious and the food dreadfully monotonous; though William was inclined to croak and prophesy ill; though she mistrusted the sallow Le Camus and the suave Dr. Garnier and even fancied, now and again, that Jerome was lack-

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ing in signs of affection, Elizabeth never complained, and never seriously doubted that he was prepared to stand by her to the end. She seemed to be made of steel.

Besides, there was much to delight her in the very fact of having reached this long-desired continent; even though little squalls followed one another as they neared the shore, and the sea was rough and grey, with hurrying, white-capped, fierce little waves. As they sailed up the mouth of the Tagus she was first on one side of the brig and then on the other, so eager was she to miss nothing. As for Jerome, he had difficulty, now, in hiding his agitation, sometimes pacing the deck rapidly with Le Camus or Garnier, deep in talk, sometimes alone. Twice, as they neared their destination, he went below to change his clothes, coming up the second time dressed in full naval uniform. As they approached the harbour, Elizabeth too went down to her cabin to make herself beautiful for whatever events might be in store. And so successful was she that when her toilet was done it was hard to believe that she had spent three trying weeks on ship-board.

They dropped anchor in the harbour, and soon enough another French armed frigate hailed them, and coming up, dropped anchor alongside. At the sight of this second warlike vessel, Mrs. Anderson gave a little scream, and said, "It may be the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte himself." But though the others assured her that nothing was less likely, she was not really convinced until a stout, red-faced naval officer clambered on board in the full glory of cocked hat, gold lace and brass buttons, and informed them that no passengers were to be allowed to land until after the

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arrival of the French Consul-General. After making his little speech he returned to the frigate again, and Jerome noticed that one gun was trained directly upon them. At the sight, his spirits sank considerably, for it was not, to say the least, a gesture of welcome. Then they settled down to wait.

"Perhaps it mean something," Jerome said, in answer to Mrs. Anderson's nervous queries, "perhaps it mean nothing at all." He flung out his hands. "Who can say?"

"I intend to put the best construction on it," said Elizabeth, "until I am obliged to do otherwise."

"I'm very much afraid," William said, gloomily, "that there is only one construction to be put on it."

"You've thought the worst the whole way over, William," said his sister, "so you, at least, won't be disappointed if it happens." And she turned to Jerome and asked him why there were so many boats in the harbour flying the French flag and carrying guns. He explained that the French were there to enforce the blockade against Great Britain. Portugal, he said, had been most unwilling to close her ports to her friends the English, which would have made the blockade quite ineffective.

"One of these days," he said in French, "Portugal will have cause to regret her friendship with England. And not only Portugal, but all friends of England."

At last, after some hours had passed, when all were growing impatient and weary, and the scene had acquired the boring familiarity of a thrice-read newspaper, a boat was seen to be pulling out towards them. It presently came alongside and was made fast, and when

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a rope ladder was let down, M. Serrurier, Napoleon's Consul-General in Lisbon, ascended it.

The little group on the deck greeted him with all politeness, and received from their visitor a formal and chilly bow, unaccompanied by a smile. He at once made known his wish to speak privately with Monsieur Bonaparte—alas, not “His Imperial Highness, Prince Jerome”—and Jerome went below with him into the saloon, while the rest waited with lowered spirits on the deck. Elizabeth was forced to admit to herself that as far as the Consul-General was concerned she might have been eighteen or eighty, for he had not given her so much as a glance. Well, her turn would perhaps come.

When the two returned she had only to look at Jerome's face to know that things were going far from well. She had rarely seen that lively countenance so dark and so downcast. Then, to her surprise, M. Serrurier approached her, bowed, brought his heels together like a dancing-master, and looking just over her head, asked:

“And what can I do for Miss Patterson?”

A shock ran through each member of the group.

Miss Patterson! With Jerome's child soon to be born! Miss Patterson, with the ring he had given her on her finger! Miss Patterson, when no less a person than Bishop Carroll himself had pronounced them man and wife and given them his blessing! The man's impertinence stiffened her spine and made her go cold with anger. Her quick brain was ready, in the space of a second, with her answer, and Jerome was never more pleased with her than when she said, drawing herself up and forcing the Frenchman to meet her eyes:

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"Tell your master that Madame Bonaparte is ambitious, and demands her rights as a member of the Imperial family."

At the same moment she put a restraining hand on William's arm, for though he knew little French, he had heard her called "Miss Patterson", and had made a sudden movement as though he would have knocked the little man down.

M. Serrurier bowed again.

"You have been warned, mademoiselle. My instructions are to inform you that you will not be allowed to land at any port, and that you are to return at once to the United States. These are the Emperor's orders."

His orders! She was to obey the Emperor's orders!

"But I wish to see the Emperor," she said. "I must see him. Kindly allow me to land with my husband. I demand it."

Jerome turned to her, a look of embarrassment and apology on his face.

"Monsieur Serrurier has his instructions, Elise. I suppose he must obey them."

"But . . . but it's impossible! What are we to do? Dr. Garnier, will you please explain to this gentleman that I . . ."

"It is of no use, Elise," interrupted Jerome. "I have already told him. He says that on no account whatever are you to be allowed to land. He will give me my papers and permit me to go ashore, but only on condition, he says, that I do not take you with me. Those are his orders."

"But, monsieur," protested Elizabeth, speaking once more to Serrurier, "you are not monsters here in

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Europe. You are men; I had thought you were gentlemen. You cannot treat me so. Surely some mistake has been made."

There was not the slightest change in the Consul's manner or expression.

"Mademoiselle, I regret it is impossible for me to permit you to land. You must return to the United States at once. The Emperor's decree is final and irrevocable."

"Dry little man, little bit of official machinery, how I hate you!" thought Elizabeth, and for a moment the scene swam before her eyes.

"You must sit down, dear," said Mrs. Anderson, who had been watching her anxiously. "Come below with me and let the gentlemen settle this by themselves. There is nothing for us to do."

Elizabeth brushed her aside impatiently.

"Monsieur," she persisted, speaking in her excellent French, "you are insulting a great and friendly country by your treatment of me. Our President has written a letter to your Emperor about me. There has been an unfortunate mistake. When the Emperor knows the facts, he will wish to receive me, and your discourtesy will do you no good. No harm can possibly be done by allowing me to go ashore with my husband. Much harm can be done by refusing us admission."

It was difficult for those who were watching the face of the Consul-General to believe that he had even heard what Elizabeth was saying. His expression was blank, a veil seemed to have dropped before his eyes. He said, addressing himself to Jerome, "I beg you will inform Mademoiselle Patterson that the Emperor's decisions are quite unalterable."

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"Elise," said Jerome, taking her arm, "Monsieur Serrurier can only do what he is told. There is nothing more to be said at present, I am afraid. Come with me down to the saloon. I wish to talk to you."

She turned to him with a searching look, then obeyed him and they went below together. Already an alteration appeared to have taken place in them. They seemed dimmed, and a little numbed. They moved slowly, like people who have just received news which must cause a great and unwelcome change in their lives, and though they tried to control their faces there was in them dismay, bewilderment and a look of shock.

In the little saloon, Elizabeth sank down on the nearest seat, a settee that was fastened to the wall, and for a moment Jerome feared she might faint. He sat beside her, supporting her in his arms, but almost immediately she rallied and sat upright, assuming an air of confidence that she was far from feeling, and smiling a little.

"I am quite well; I was only a trifle dizzy for a moment. Well, what are we to do? Can this ridiculous little official really keep us from landing? It seems preposterous."

"I am very much afraid that he can," Jerome said, staring down at the floor.

"Then what are we to do? Shall we sail on to some other port? Perhaps to Amsterdam?"

"Wherever we go," Jerome replied gloomily, "he says it will be the same; Havre, Calais, Amsterdam, they are all watched. No one will dare to disobey the Emperor's orders. His power is absolute."

"Then what," she cried again, "are we to do?"

He was silent for a moment.

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"There seems to be only one course open to us."

"And that is . . . ?"

"I must see Napoleon myself, as soon as possible, and convince him that whatever happens, I will not leave my wife. Whatever the circumstances, I will never do that. He cannot separate us."

"He can't," she said, "if we don't wish it. If the worst comes to the worst, and what Serrurier says is really true, I suppose we could go back to America. But that means giving up everything . . . all our hopes. We won't go without a fight. Surely there's a way. Jerome, we have money. Cannot this wretch, Serrurier, be bribed or bought?"

In spite of his anxieties, Jerome smiled at this.

"My dear Elise, Serrurier was sent here because Napoleon knew he could trust him. He is the son of Marshal Serrurier. Napoleon would soon hear, if he took a bribe from us, and then his career would be ended. And no doubt he makes more money in a month out of his duties than we could afford to give him."

"You have often told me," she persisted, "of bribes you have given yourself, and quite successfully."

"Certainly, but one must know to whom one may give bribes and to whom one may not. One may not offer them to Serrurier."

"Then what have you to suggest?"

He put an arm about her.

"There is only one thing, I am afraid, and that means parting from you, my Elise, though it will only be for a few weeks, at the very most."

Outwardly she remained calm.

"What, exactly, do you propose to do?"

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"I shall land here and go straight to Milan to find Napoleon. Serrurier says that he is there, and not in Paris, though he does not tell me what has taken him there. Meanwhile, I think it would be best for you to go on, in the boat, to Amsterdam."

"But you say they will be on the watch there, too."

"You need not land. In any case, it will be much nearer, and I will join you."

"When?"

"As soon as I have talked to Napoleon and obtained his permission to bring you to him."

"Suppose," she asked, "that he refuses to give it?"

He kissed her tenderly. "He will not refuse," he said. "I will show him this." And he pulled out from inside his coat a miniature of her, set with diamonds and hung about his neck by a fine black ribbon.

"It is not the same thing, I am afraid. He should see *me*. I believe I could charm him. I'm not sure that my miniature can."

He stroked her cheek.

"Elise, Elise, all must turn out well. It must, it must! My little wife, how could I live without her? I could not. I would die."

"Your wife," she said, "and perhaps your son. I'm almost certain it will be a boy, Jerome."

"Yes. My little wife and my little son."

Suddenly her calm went, and she clung to him in a sort of panic. "Jerome, Jerome, they're determined to part us! Perhaps they'll succeed in the end. Oh, it's cruel, it's cruel! We are so happy! Life is just beginning for us. To come to Europe, at last, and find *this* waiting for me! What have I ever done to deserve it?"

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He held her to him tightly, kissing her cheek, her forehead.

"Courage, my little wife, courage! You have always been so brave, braver than I. Be brave now. We must separate, but it is nothing, it is for a few weeks only. Then I will come to you, and all will be well. I swear it. I swear it. Napoleon will forgive me; he has always forgiven me. Courage, my little Elise!"

"If I could only see him!" she cried. "If I could see him just once . . . even for five minutes . . . I never, never dreamt that we would be denied that."

"It shows," said Jerome, searching for a crumb of comfort to offer her, "that his heart is not really hard. He is afraid to risk a meeting."

"It also shows," she pointed out, "how determined he is."

"Yes, that is true," he agreed, unhappily.

"What harm does he imagine I could do?" she asked. "After all, what could be better for both countries than an alliance between an American woman of good family and the Imperial family of France? Cannot he see the advantages of it? It would bring France and America closer than ever before."

"You may be sure, my little wife, that I will point that out to him. Now, no tears, Elise; it is bad for you."

She quickly brushed the back of her hand over her eyes. "I'm not crying. I never cry."

"Come to your cabin," he urged, "and lie down while I speak to Serrurier."

"That man!" she exclaimed, bitterly. "To-day I thought we would be on dry land once more."

"That could not have happened in any case," he

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assured her. "Serrurier says that all vessels coming into Lisbon must remain in quarantine for two weeks. It is because of the cholera."

He saw her face light up.

"Then you'll be with us for two weeks more? Perhaps by that time we shall have heard from your brother."

He shook his head. "It will not be necessary for me. Such rules do not apply to me. After all, I am not an ordinary traveller. I am the Emperor's brother."

"And much good it's doing us," she thought, but refrained from speaking the words. "Will you go at once then?" she asked.

"Serrurier says I shall receive a permit in three days, for myself and for Le Camus. And I think that the sooner I go now, the better."

She was silent. He drew her head closer and kissed her cheek.

"Come, Elise. Come to your cabin and rest while I go and speak to Serrurier. It is not good to keep him waiting too long."

"Let him wait!" she cried. Then, seeing his dubious look, she got up, as though that brief rest had given her fresh strength and said, "Very well, speak to him now, but I will come with you. I've had enough of my cabin and I'll have to endure more. And Jerome, speak of me as your wife in his presence. '*Miss Patterson!*' It is not the treatment I expected from your chivalrous countrymen."

He kissed her once again and tenderly patted her shoulder. "We will make it up to you one day, little wife. I swear it."

They went on deck together, Jerome with an arm

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about her waist, and she leaning against him prettily. They made a charming pair, calculated to move any but a heart of stone to admiration and to indulgence.

Serrurier was pacing the deck between Le Camus and Garnier—"They won't help my cause," Elizabeth thought—while William and Mrs. Anderson were holding an indignation meeting with Captain Stevenson at a little distance. As soon as he saw the young couple, Serrurier left his two companions and approached; and making his absurd, jerky little bow, he waited for Jerome to speak.

"If you will arrange that I am permitted to land in three days," Jerome said stiffly, "I will go in search of my brother, the Emperor, and adjust this matter. I am aware that you are acting under orders and doing what you conceive to be your duty, so I will say no more. My wife, Madame Bonaparte, agrees with me that my only course is to leave her here on the ship for the present, much as I dislike doing so, and proceed to Milan."

For an instant there appeared on M. Serrurier's face the slightest and briefest of smiles. It was merely a faintly upward movement of cheeks, eyebrows and moustache.

"I am pleased," he said, "that you have so decided." He put his hand into an inside pocket of his coat and produced a letter, which he held out to Jerome. "Permit me," he said, "to give you this. Will you be so kind as to read it?"

Jerome, with something of a shock, saw that it was from his mother, and that it was addressed not to him, but to M. Serrurier. It was written in the most formal terms and merely stated that she had received a letter

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from her son, the Emperor, asking her to pass on to the Consul-General the following instructions for M. Jerome Bonaparte upon his arrival; that he was to proceed without delay to Milan, travelling by way of Barcelona, Perpignon, Toulouse, Grenoble, and Turin, and that he was on no account to deviate from this course.

Jerome knew that his mother, in writing this letter to Serrurier, was merely obeying Napoleon's orders, but such curt instructions from her, even though sent through a government official and therefore necessarily formal, chilled him; for was he not, next to Napoleon, her best beloved son? He handed the letter back.

"I quite understand. That is, of course, the route I would naturally take."

"Then," said Serrurier, "there is nothing more for me to say. If you will permit me, I will now return to Lisbon. The papers enabling you to land will be sent to you without delay. I feel sure, monsieur, that the decision you have taken is the right one, and that you will never have cause to regret it. If I can be of any service to you in Lisbon, pray command me." He bowed once more. "*Au revoir, Monsieur. Adieu, Mademoiselle.* And will you be so kind as to convey my *adieux* to your brother?"

He did not wait for the reply he knew better than to expect, but stepped briskly to the rail and turned about to descend the ladder. Three minutes later he was being rowed back to Lisbon.

William joined his sister, his face very red.

"I never in my life wanted to hit a man as I wanted to hit that conceited, impertinent, dressed-up little donkey," he said, and his voice shook with anger.

Jerome replied, in his awkward English, "It will not

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much aid us if you do so." He lifted his arms in an expressive gesture and let them fall again. "He do what he is told. *Voilà tout!*"

"And now I suppose you'll do what you're told," said William, with undisguised scorn. "It's a pretty state of affairs, I must say."

"Elise and I, we are in perfect accord," said Jerome smoothly. He liked William far less than he liked Robert, but his manner to him was always polite, if at times slightly condescending.

"Which means that you've persuaded her to let you go ashore without her, I suppose, and leave her behind on this ship?"

"*Mais naturellement!*" cried Jerome, with affected surprise. "Of what good I stay here? I can *do* nothing here. And she is not alone. She have you, she have Mrs. Anderson, she have Dr. Garnier."

"Well, it's an outrage," said William, his anger mounting, "and I'm going to write to the President about it. He ought to be told how American citizens are treated in this country of yours."

"*Pardon!* We are in Portugal, not in France," said Jerome.

"Well, you French have grabbed the whole of Europe, as far as I can make out. And Serrurier is no Portuguese. Neither is your precious brother. It's a damned shame. Betsy's in no state to receive this sort of treatment."

"Don't you worry about me, William," said Elizabeth, seeing that the tempers of both her husband and her brother were rising fast. "I can take care of myself. And it's no good abusing the French. This is a family matter, and it will be best arranged as family

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matters should be arranged—without outside interference. Now I'm going down to my cabin to rest."

"And high time too," said Mrs. Anderson. "In all my experience, I've never known a young female in your condition receive so little consideration. But I suppose I'd better hold my tongue——"

"Much better," said Elizabeth, with her brief little smile.

"——or I'll say something that some folks won't like to hear." And still grumbling, the older woman fussily arranged a shawl about Elizabeth's shoulders, for a cold wind was blowing, and propelled her towards the companionway.

Jerome left William and went to the windward side of the brig, and when Garnier and then Le Camus approached him, he told them that he wished to be alone for a while. For the next hour he paced up and down, giving his mind up wholly to the situation that had now arisen.

In a few days, he and Elise would be far apart.

Had she fainted, wept, collapsed, he thought, had she shown less spirit, more despair, he might not have dared to leave her; he might have decided, perhaps, that their best course would be to return to America at once, and together. Women had had babies on ship-board before, quite successfully, and with Dr. Garnier and Mrs. Anderson to look after her, there would have been little reason to fear. But there was something in the way she spoke, moved, looked, in the tones of her voice, in her steely courage, that persuaded him that she would come safely through whatever trials . . . yes, *whatever* trials, awaited her; that convinced him, in fact, that he might consider, a little, his own future, his own career;

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that he need not altogether, and so early in life, throw away ambition. Who could tell? If he fell in, now, with Napoleon's plans, perhaps the rest would follow; perhaps Napoleon would consent, in time, to his reunion with Elise.

"She is really very strong," he thought. "Very strong. She has great independence of spirit; far, far more than most women. She has never depended on me, as so many women depend on their husbands. She is really extraordinary, Elise. That night of the storm . . . and the next day, when she made us drop her over the side. . . and even when she fell into the water, she never screamed. No, she is not at all like other women. How she enjoyed her dinner that day, as if it were a little fête! . . . Yes, she is extraordinary. She can bear much. And just now, really, she was magnificent. 'Tell your master that Madame Bonaparte is ambitious and demands her rights—*demands* her rights—as a member of the Imperial family.' It was superb! It is a courage and a spirit quite above the ordinary. Women like Elise do not die of broken hearts; they do not go into a decline, or become ill, or lose their desire to live; no, no, it is not at all that type."

He paused at the rail and stared at Lisbon and at the hills behind it, beyond which lay Southern Spain, France, Italy, where his mighty brother—and that brother's mighty displeasure—awaited him.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he thought, "I find myself in a difficult position. No man was ever more evilly situated. What is one to do? My beautiful Elise, I love her, naturally I shall never give her up. Never. That is not to be considered. And yet, if I were forced to do so by a will even stronger than my own, by circumstances which are

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too powerful for me, it is well that she is not of the type that despairs. But I love her too much. She is so beautiful. Even now, if Napoleon were to see her, all might be well. He has no disgust at all for women who are soon to be mothers . . . it is something of which he approves . . . that is, of course, if they are to be the mothers of Frenchmen. If he were only to see her, he must surely embrace her. But he is determined not to see her. That is a risk he refuses to take. . . . It is cruel that things should happen so to me. Naturally, a young man is ambitious; he wishes to make a career for himself . . . and never were a young man's opportunities greater than mine. Even greater, perhaps, than I can yet imagine. And what a wife Elise would be for an ambitious man! With her, one could advance oneself very far. But if I cannot have both Elise and a career? It seems that, for once, Napoleon will not overlook what I have done. For the first time in our lives he has not said: 'But it is Jerome, it is the youngest of us all. It is my little brother. How can I not forgive him?' And *maman* . . . that letter! Certainly there is little to encourage a man in all this, a man who loves his wife as I love Elise."

The three days that passed before he was to land were given up less to love and sighs and protestations than to speculations as to their probable future, to plans and arrangements, and to the endeavour to prepare for almost any eventuality. One thing and one only was never so much as mentioned between them; the possibility of her being forced to return to America without him. That would be unendurable, unthinkable. So long, so long to wait before they could be together again! So far apart! Months before letters could be

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exchanged, before either could get news of the other.

"No," thought Elizabeth, "that is something I could never face. Go back without him? No, never! The bride of little more than a year? How the people of Baltimore would talk and whisper. I should be obliged to meet endless scornful or pitying looks; I should have to endure the sympathy of all those *friends* who secretly rejoice because I have been sent back, like unwanted goods. Never that! Never!"

Jerome did not speak of it because to do so would have been to admit the possibility of utter defeat; and because, too, he had sworn a hundred times that he would not be parted from her for more than a few weeks at most. It was a dark possibility to be kept at the back of the mind, not to be brought forward into the light.

As the time for parting drew near, she stiffened herself to bear the pain of it. Presently she would see him go down over the side, into the waiting boat; his shadow, Le Camus, beside him. She would see his figure grow tinier and tinier until she could no longer distinguish it at all. Presently she would be left alone with a worried, indignant brother, with fussy, repetitive Mrs. Anderson, with smooth, unfriendly Dr. Garnier, whom she knew better than to trust. A schemer, a worker in the dark, like Le Camus. Her only comforter then would be Captain Stevenson, in whose kindly, respectful care she greatly preferred to be.

The day before he left the ship, Jerome disbursed money handsomely to Captain Stevenson and the crew. A round sum to the Captain—it was still Mr. Patterson's money—and, to commemorate the journey, a present of some plate that he had brought with him from France. He could not leave the *Erin* without making his custom-

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ary lavish gestures. How he adored the spending of money! How he loved to confer favours! Captain Stevenson's embarrassed thanks—for he had only done his duty—were pleasing to him. "How easily," Jerome thought, intoxicated by his own condescension, "I could play the part of a Prince—or of a King. And I am already a Prince, if only Napoleon will forgive me once, just once more, and for the last time!"

Elizabeth never broke down, never gave way. She took great pains with her appearance during those last few days, letting Mrs. Anderson brush her hair until it shone, and wearing her most becoming clothes; for she was determined that he should not carry away a caricature of her in his mind, but would remember her as his lovely Elise. Nor must he suspect from any look or word of hers how profound were her fears for their future. She said to herself:

"I must never let him think that I am not sure of his loyalty. I must let him see that I trust him absolutely."

She recalled some sage words of Robert's, written from Paris to her father, and shown to her:

"It is the duty of my sister, as a wife, to retain and increase the affection of her husband, and her exertions ought, if possible, to be doubled from the peculiarity of her situation."

Well, no one recognized better than she did herself the peculiarity of her situation; and was she not obeying the wise counsel of her brother by showing Jerome what complete faith she had in him? In yet another letter, this time to her, Robert had also said: "Our dependence is now entirely on Jerome's honour. With firmness on his part, the affair may yet terminate favourably."

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She too believed that this was true. And if she showed firmness herself, how much easier for Jerome to show it when the time came! So no tears, no pleadings, no signs of doubt or weakness. Naturally he would be resolute, naturally he would be loyal, naturally his love for her would be unshakable. She would take care never to let him guess that she knew, only too well, the risk she was running in letting him go; in letting him throw himself, alone, on that brother who was a law unto himself and whose will was the mightiest will in Europe.

And indeed, when all was said and done, and in spite of William's lively indignation and her own secret misgivings, what else could she do?

So the night before he left they had a gay little dinner—or it seemed gay enough, upon the surface—and drank one another's healths in a bottle of Mr. Patterson's wine. For in spite of a half-promise extracted from M. Serrurier by Jerome, no fresh supplies of food or drink had been sent out to them, and all they had so far been able to obtain for themselves were a few barrels of water purchased from some Portuguese sailors. Elizabeth and Jerome drank, in Madeira from the cellars of the house in South Street, to their speedy reunion, looking deeply into each other's eyes. That last night was spent wakefully by both of them, lying together in Jerome's narrow berth, too uncomfortable to sleep, not wishing, in fact, to waste the time in sleep, but whispering to each other and listening to the small waves of the harbour clapping the sides of the brig as with open hands.

But dawn came, inexorable as an executioner, and the day was there to be faced. It proved to be a fine one,

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which they chose to take as a good omen, with the hills of Portugal looking very blue and inviting, and the waters of the Tagus dancing in the sunlight. Jerome decreed, at the very last, that the *Erin* was to wait there the full two weeks before proceeding to Amsterdam, in case word should come that Napoleon had relented; when they might land at Lisbon as they had hoped to do.

"In which case," said Jerome, "you will come straight to Paris, and I will meet you there."

And for a brief moment Elizabeth pictured herself walking with Jerome in the Tuileries gardens; saw herself affectionately welcomed by his mother, his sisters and brothers—even, at last, by Napoleon himself. It was an enchanting vision of a place and a time for which she yearned inexpressibly, and upon which all her hopes and longings were centred, but she put it resolutely away. She was no idle dreamer, and to indulge in the luxury of dreaming now was only a weakness and a painful folly.

Le Camus—how she hated the little self-seeking, untrustworthy creature!—hovered near her while they waited for the boat to be lowered. She could guess what was in his mind. He wished to leave a good impression, for after all, the future was by no means certain, and she might soon be recognized as the wife of a member of the Imperial family. She found his affability hard to bear, and was more curt with him than she had yet allowed herself to be.

When he said, "Believe that there is nothing I desire so much, madame, as the happy fulfilment of all your hopes," she could have slapped his face. There was nothing he desired less, and she knew it. And he would be at Jerome's elbow, with his insinuations and his

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flattery, all the way to Milan. Well, there was nothing she could do to prevent it; nothing at all.

For a few painful seconds, during which the others turned away their faces, and some dried their eyes, she and Jerome clung together, while he murmured, "My little wife, I love you, always remember it. My dear, dear little wife." Then he turned abruptly away and went very quickly over the side and into the waiting boat, with *Le Camus* not more than five paces behind him. Dr. Garnier, after saying good-bye, leaned over the rail, a little apart, and saw the distance between the brig and the little boat grow wider and wider; hating his duties there, hating being left behind; "Ready to hate me," Elizabeth thought, "if he doesn't already."

And she watched, as, these last few days, she had so often pictured herself watching, until she could distinguish Jerome no longer; until the small open boat with its dipping oars became too difficult to follow against the dancing brightness of the water, and presently was quite lost to view among the maze of other boats at the landing-place; and Lisbon, that busy little town which she was never to see, had swallowed him up.

Now she had neither part to play nor duties to perform; now everything was taken out of her hands, and her life was at the mercy of Fate, of Fate in the shape of those two incalculable Bonapartes, who were soon to meet and to oppose each other's wills—one so mighty, the other so weak—in Italy. Now there was nothing to do but wait, wait, wait, and with what patience she could. Her existence was narrowed down to the very planks of the *Erin's* decks, to the little saloon, with its one picture—a print of General Washington crossing the Delaware—with its swinging lanterns and creaking

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walls, to her tiny, cramped cabin, so full of boxes and trunks that she could scarcely move there. As for the view of Lisbon and the hills beyond, she hardly looked at them now. Nor at the frigate, which still watched. For the present she and all of them had but one desire: that Serrurier should show himself sufficiently human to send them supplies. And at last they came, and though they were by no means lavish, they could once more delight in the taste of fresh fruits and vegetables, and milk and eggs—but cautiously, for who could tell when more would reach them?

The two weeks of waiting were tedious in the extreme, and only relieved, for Elizabeth, by the receipt of two fond letters from Jerome, one from an address in Spain, telling of a chance meeting with friends, and one from Mount Cenis. He was travelling as fast as it was possible to travel, and would never pause, he said, till he had reached Milan. In the second letter he said he had heard that Josephine was with the Emperor, and that they had not yet reached Milan, but were spending a few days at Alexandria, as Napoleon wished to fulfil a promise, made to Josephine, to show her where the battle of Marengo had taken place.

“This is only what I have learnt from travellers,” he added, “but what is certain is that he will be in Milan when I arrive.”

She passed much of the time in reading. She had brought a supply of books from Baltimore with her; some “improving” works of history and biography, some novels by Mrs. Gunning and some popular French romances by Madame de Genlis. When the weather was mild enough, she had a chair brought out on deck for her, and read there, her face well protected by a

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veil. But most of the time she lay in the saloon, looking up from her books now and again for a brief word with Mrs. Anderson, or a talk with William, who was becoming increasingly restless and irritable. As for Dr. Garnier, they saw little of him. He was busy with a diary of impressive size, and remained, most of the time, in his cabin, only appearing for meals, or for a brisk walk on the deck.

When the two weeks were over, and no word had come from the Emperor, the *Erin*, with the French frigate's gun trained upon her to the very last, weighed anchor and headed out into the Bay, to try her luck elsewhere.

At once they encountered rough weather, with high waves running this way and that in frantic and flurried disorder.

"I look for nothing good on this trip," said William, between one bout of sickness and another, and Elizabeth smiled her brief little smile and said:

"I would be vastly surprised if you did."

They were badly tossed about, but that steely courage of hers remained with her. She had got used to the sea now; she refused to be conquered by it, and never once took to her berth except at night. The shores of Spain—"no doubt a romantic country, but how glad I shall be to see the last of it," Mrs. Anderson said—went all too slowly past their port-holes, and then the coast of France, which Elizabeth viewed with mixed feelings; and at last the Channel took them, and was only a little less unkind than the Bay. Adverse winds delayed them, and their supplies began to run short again.

"I reckon we shall be able to get all the vittals we

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require at Amsterdam," said Captain Stevenson, for whom politics, even now, and in spite of recent odd experiences, did not seem nearly as real as the needs of ships and human beings.

"No doubt we shall," said Elizabeth, but she felt far from certain, remembering the black muzzle of the French frigate's gun that had for so long been pointed in their direction. And Frenchmen, it seemed, were everywhere. She longed for news. Here she was, cruising about the edges of Europe and knowing nothing whatever of what was going on. Nor was she likely to hear for some time. She turned to her books.

"You're lucky to be able to interest yourself in reading, I'm sure," said Mrs. Anderson, for the twentieth time. "I wish I could."

It was a great relief when, as April drew to a close, they neared the Texal Roads, for they were so inexpressibly weary of being tossed about that they longed to creep into the shelter of a quiet harbour; or better, far better still, to reach the land, the beloved land, and know once more its stillness and security; and to find comfort in an inn, no matter how simple.

"So far so good, if they'll only let us go ashore," said William, as the brig, with a following wind and full sail, came smartly up the Roads.

"I can't imagine that they would refuse," Elizabeth said. "After all, we can give them an undertaking, if they wish, not to leave Amsterdam."

"I don't trust any of these foreigners," said Mrs. Anderson. "Every day that I live I'm more and more thankful that I'm an American citizen and come from a country where people behave themselves like decent, civilized human beings and not like savages. Just

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imagine an American ship lying in the Patapsco and pointing her guns at some poor innocent French girl who is soon to become a mother! ”

“If only I need never hear that voice again! ” thought Elizabeth. “She shall go back to Baltimore just as soon as I can find a pretext for sending her. Even Aunt Spear would have been less irritating.”

It had taken them just two weeks to beat their way through the Bay of Biscay and the English Channel, and they were rejoicing in their first sight of Amsterdam when a little French frigate that had for some time seemed to follow them, and was now nearly abreast of them, sent an angry shot across their bows. Mrs. Anderson screamed and rushed below, into the saloon, where Elizabeth was reading.

“They’re firing on us again! ” she cried, forgetting, in her fright, that Elizabeth must not be alarmed. But that young lady only laid down her book for an instant.

“Don’t worry,” she said, “it’s just Europe’s way of welcoming us. You should be accustomed to it by now.”

Captain Stevenson at once stood to, and dropped anchor, for following the frigate was a far larger ship, which proved to be a French man-of-war carrying sixty-four guns. She came within easy hailing distance of the *Erin*; so close indeed that the startled Americans could see every detail of her, and the row of faces crowding her rails. Both frigate and sloop-of-war dropped anchor, one on either side of the *Erin*, and presently a boat put out from the man-of-war and was rowed towards the brig. Elizabeth, hearing that a party from the sloop was about to come aboard, decided to remain in the saloon, and so missed the sight of the French Commander stepping on the *Erin’s* deck in full

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uniform and accompanied by two junior officers—one of whom was there to act as his interpreter—and two members of the crew. The Commander, splendid in gold lace, was a man of few words, and addressed himself solely to Captain Stevenson through his interpreter, informing him that he was on no account to proceed farther but was to be off instantly and to hold no communication whatever with the shore.

By this time Captain Stevenson had difficulty in keeping his temper, but he kept it heroically, and even tried to bring the Frenchman to a more reasonable frame of mind.

"Tell your Commander," he said, to the young interpreter, "that this is an American ship, and that America and France ain't at war just yet. And tell him that there are ladies aboard, and that one of 'em is in mighty poor health. And before we proceed any farther, tell him, we must have rest and some fresh provisions. It's the wish of the ladies to go ashore and spend a few days quietly in Amsterdam."

"That is quite impossible," said the Commander, through his interpreter.

"Well," said Captain Stevenson, "then we'll agree to staying right here where we are until word comes from the Emperor of the French, or the Emperor's brother, Mr. Jerome Bonaparte, telling us what we're to do next. And if that ain't reasonable, sir, I don't know what reasonable means."

The Lieutenant translated briskly, and the Commander as briskly replied. They were to hold no communication whatever with the shore, he repeated, and they would not be supplied with provisions. If they remained there, they did so at their own risk, and they

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would be treated as prisoners of war. Those were the Emperor's orders.

Captain Stevenson protested indignantly that his ship lacked both food and water, but the Commander had nothing more to say. He took from his pocket a document, which he handed to the Lieutenant, who handed it to Captain Stevenson. They then departed, without further words.

The document, when opened, proved to be a curt announcement from one Schimmelpenninck, Grand Pensionary of the Batavian Republic, to the effect that any person assuming the name of Madame Jerome Bonaparte was forbidden to land in any port in that country, and that any persons attempting to hold communication with her would suffer the severest penalties.

As soon as the visitors had returned to the sloop, William went below to break the bad news to Elizabeth. He found her quite prepared for it.

"I didn't suppose," she said, "that they would send a sloop-of-war to welcome us."

"Good God!" cried William. "What a situation! What are we to do now?"

"Stay here, until word comes from Jerome. It's all we can do."

"But we're short of food and water." He strode up and down the little saloon in an extremity of dismay.

"Sit down, William, do. You worry me, stamping about. We must get food and water, somehow, of course. Captain Stevenson must find a way. Meanwhile, we must be economical with what we still have. The provisions should be carefully rationed. Tell Captain Stevenson I say so."

So there they lay, with the guns of the two ships on

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either side trained upon them. They could neither go nor stay in safety, and the situation began to take a really serious turn. The Dutch trembled at Napoleon's word, and Schimmelpenninck—the very name infuriated William—knew that he was Grand Pensionary only so long as Napoleon might choose to keep him there, and already there were rumours that a Bonaparte might soon be made King of Holland. It was not likely, therefore, that he would disobey, in the slightest degree, the Conqueror's orders.

But, luckily for the *Erin* and those aboard her, the American Consul in Amsterdam, one Sylvanus Bourne, feared no man, and conceived that his whole duty was to guard American interests in Holland. He heard of their arrival and their plight, and his indignation was extreme. He at once wrote to Schimmelpenninck in the strongest terms, demanding that the American brig with its American passengers be allowed to supply herself with water and provisions immediately. And he promptly procured a boat himself and came to see them, bringing fruit and vegetables and eggs and water, and such delicacies as he thought the ladies might require after their weeks at sea. And as no one could be found who dared to carry the provisions aboard, he himself and two of his associates brought them to the dock and loaded them into the boat themselves.

The little party on the *Erin* greeted him with unbounded delight—all except Dr. Garnier, who, hungry though he was, felt the ambiguity of his position and remained in his cabin.

"I don't think," cried Elizabeth, "that I have ever been so glad to see a human face as I am to see yours, sir."

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"Well, ma'am," said the Consul, passing a hand over his chin and smiling, "it ain't much of a face, but such as it is, it and its owner are surely at your disposal. You've had cruel treatment, ma'am, and I'm ashamed, yes, I'm downright ashamed. The Dutch are kindly enough folks as a rule, but nowadays . . . well, nowadays, as we all know, Europe sits and shivers at the nod of one man. So there it is, and it's a bad business. And now what do you good people reckon to do?"

"Wait here," said Elizabeth, "till we hear from my husband. That is, if they will let us wait."

Mr. Bourne was clearly troubled. He was a homely, family man, he regarded even international politics with the eye of a homely, family man, and he felt that the presence of the sixty-four gun ship so menacingly close to this charming, pretty and delicately bred young woman was an outrage not to be borne; a needless and disgraceful incursion into the domestic life of an American lady.

"Well, ma'am," he said, unable to hide his anxiety, "I hope and pray that you won't have to wait longer than a day or two, at most. I feel downright humiliated that citizens of America should be treated so under my very nose, and I not able to do a thing about it."

"You've already done a very great deal," she told him.

"You don't think they mean to fire on us, do you?" cried Mrs. Anderson, with a frightened face, but Mr. Bourne made haste to assure her that the guns were only trained on them as a matter of form; nothing, he said, was less likely than that the authorities intended that they should go off.

"And now tell us something of what's going on in Europe," Elizabeth begged. "We've been cooped up

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here so long that really we scarcely know anything at all, beyond the fact that my august brother-in-law made himself Emperor last May, and Josephine Empress. What is happening? "

"A lot," said Mr. Bourne, crossing his thin legs and making the tips of his fingers meet. "A whole lot. So much that I hardly know where to begin."

They plied him with questions, which he answered intelligently and often humorously. He was a well-informed man, and vastly interested in the happenings of his own time.

"It's my opinion," he said, "that the civilized world, if we may so call it, ma'am, without undue exaggeration, has never been and never will be again, in such a confoundedly upheaved and unnatural state as it is now. The English, I'm glad to say, keep tolerably calm, but I reckon they've made up their minds about just one thing, and that is that Bonaparte, sooner or later, has got to be pushed clean out of Europe. They look upon him as a scourge and a menace and a perpetual source of trouble and danger, and I guess there's no sacrifice they won't make to get rid of him. So there's a pretty good likelihood that Europe will be an uncomfortable place to live in for years to come."

"More power to the British, then," said William, who had now turned against the French. "I wish we could take a hand ourselves, and help to drive him out."

Mr. Bourne smiled.

"A most unlikely proceeding, sir, I'm afraid. If you recollect, it ain't so long since we were at war with each other. Though I don't think," he added, "that the British look on themselves as our enemies, or the enemies of anyone except the Emperor of France.

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They've got a remarkable man at the head of the fleet now, and he's causing the French a lot of trouble. His name is Nelson, and if Bonaparte don't succeed in invading England, which I reckon he's fixing to do, we'll have Nelson to thank for it."

"We haven't even heard of him," said William.

"I'm afraid that in America," said his sister, "we take no interest in things that happen in the rest of the world. It's one of the drawbacks of living in that country."

"What's this Nelson doing now?" asked William.

"Chasing the French fleet, I hear, bottling it up in harbour or destroying it. He's hot on the trail of Admiral Villeneuve now, and they say there's a fine chase going on at this very moment somewhere between here and the West Indies."

"A nice time for ladies to be travelling," said Mrs. Anderson, with a shiver.

"I suppose that as I'm married to a Frenchman and a Bonaparte, I ought to hate England," Elizabeth remarked, "but I must confess that I find it quite impossible to do so."

"An interesting and enlightened country," said Mr. Bourne. "Indeed, I'm inclined to think that, next to ourselves, they're the most enlightened people in the world."

"Is George the Third still alive?" William inquired.

Mr. Bourne nodded. "A mighty stupid, mistaken critter, if all accounts are true, and a little touched here." He put a finger to his forehead. "But he means well, which is more than you can say of some of the rulers of Europe. Most of 'em seem to be either wicked or crazy."

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Elizabeth remarked that she would rather live under a mad king than a sane president. She then returned to a former topic.

"Do you really believe," she asked, "that Napoleon seriously means to invade England?"

"If he don't," said Mr. Bourne, "I reckon he wouldn't be sitting, so to speak, on the sandhills of Boulogne with about a hundred and fifty thousand men, waiting for his fleet to come and help them across."

"Oh, I wish we were safely at home!" cried Mrs. Anderson. "I wish I'd never come to Europe. I wish none of us had."

"Well, I can't help wishing it too, and that's a fact," said Mr. Bourne. He turned to Elizabeth. "I won't presume to give you advice, ma'am, but I'm pretty near old enough to be your grandpa, I guess, and mightn't it be your wisest plan to head for home now, and come back here at a more favourable time? Maybe your husband could join you in America as soon as he's through with seeing his brother."

"Oh, dear, no!" said Elizabeth, with spirit. "We're not even considering such a course. I fully expect to hear from him within the next few days, when he will either join me here or tell us what port we are to proceed to."

Mr. Bourne, in whose ears the name of Napoleon rang daily, almost hourly, wondered if she realized what pressure would be put upon that young husband of hers—he was only a boy—to do that which was required of him as a possible heir to the Imperial throne. Napoleon had uses for all his family, that was clear. He had been conquering country after country, and obviously meant to set up his brothers and sisters as kings and queens

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over them. Everyone knew the fate of Lucien, it was common knowledge. And now this frail girl, soon to be a mother, and married to one of that extraordinary family, was caught up like a leaf in the hurricane of the Emperor's progress. What hope had she of altering the direction of that gale? She little knew, she little knew. He, like Schimmelpenninck—though for a different reason—would have been thankful to see the *Erin* weigh anchor and set her sails for home. However, it was no part of his intention, in coming, to alarm his grateful countrypeople; so when it was time for him to return to Amsterdam, he contrived to leave them all in a tolerably cheerful frame of mind, and, their warm thanks once more sounding in his ears, the kindly, ungainly, lovable Consul went cautiously down the swaying ladder to the boat that waited below.

Dr. Garnier appeared, the moment he had gone, and inquired of William what had taken place during his visit and what had been said.

"We heard no good of your Emperor," said William, the Francophobe, "and it'll be thanks to the kindness of Mr. Bourne if we don't all starve here like a lot of rats in a trap."

Dr. Garnier, finding that he was unlikely to learn much from that source, returned to his writing. He was finding his position there on the brig difficult and displeasing. As soon as he knew which way affairs were going—he already had a pretty shrewd suspicion—life would be easier for him. He had no wish to offend a future princess; on the other hand, he did not care to make himself too agreeable to a soon-to-be discarded wife. It was best, he thought, to adopt a middle course and attend closely to one's diaries.

CHAPTER VII .

IF Elizabeth could have followed Jerome in his travels through Spain and France, and observed his behaviour from day to day, she would have had little cause for unhappiness, for he conducted himself admirably. Once or twice he even expressed sharp displeasure when Le Camus made references to the probable outcome of their journey to Milan. He was told, in short, to mind his own affairs. But Le Camus was able to accept reproofs without the slightest ill-feeling. He listened to them in silence and never sulked, for he was perfectly well aware of Jerome's devotion to him and of his growing dependence on him. It was his ambition, indeed, to make himself indispensable.

One day when they were in the midst of the brown Estramadura Mountains, they reached an inn which, though by no means inviting, was the first they had seen for some hours, and the last they might reach for several more. With considerable distaste, for he loathed any discomfort, Jerome decided that it would be wise to have a meal and a brief rest here before proceeding farther. Le Camus went indoors, to make arrangements for the best *déjeuner* the inn could produce, while Jerome, disliking the odours of the interior, stood at the door and watched some thin fowls scratching for a living in the dry brown earth. Hearing the clatter of hoofs and the rumble of wheels, he looked towards the road he was presently to travel and saw a small caval-

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cade approaching in a cloud of dust, followed by several carriages. The riders, he saw, wore French uniforms. Some French envoy, he supposed, on his way to Portugal with his suite. Deciding that if he were to meet distinguished countrymen he had better wash his face and hands, he disappeared into the inn. On coming out again he almost ran into a tall, fine-looking man who was very splendid, in spite of a coating of dust, in all the pomp of uniform and clanking sword and gold epaulettes. They stared at each other, the older man uncertain, but Jerome in surprised recognition. For this handsome soldier, growing a little stout now, with the fair hair and the passionate, quick-tempered face, could be no other than Napoleon's aide-de-camp and friend, General Junot.

"Junot!" he cried. "But this is extraordinary! Don't you know me? I am Jerome—Jerome, Napoleon's youngest brother. Surely you remember. I have just returned from America."

Junot clapped him hard upon both shoulders, gave a shout of pleasure, and then, putting an arm through his, cried:

"Of course! Jerome! Little Jerome! But how you have changed! You have become a man, eh?"

"Well, it was time," laughed Jerome.

"It's the truth. I didn't know you. But this is splendid. Do you know who is here with me? Laure. She is outside in the carriage, with our little girl. I came in to inquire if we could have a meal here, before going on."

"I, too," said Jerome, "and my secretary, who is travelling with me."

"Good! Then tell the landlord we will all lunch

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together. But first come and see Laure. She will be delighted."

The meeting between Jerome and Laure Permon, his old friend and playmate, was like a meeting between a brother and sister who have long been separated. Laure kissed him with affection, and could scarcely believe her eyes, she said, when she saw how he had altered. Her mother and his were close friends; indeed, both families had been intimate ever since early days in Corsica, and it was generally thought, though no one ever alluded to it now, that Napoleon had wished to marry the mother, pretty Madame Permon, in the first years of her widowhood. Jerome and Laure were nearly of an age, and he was no less delighted to see her than she him. It was a godsend to him to have met this old friend, this charming and warm-hearted young woman, especially at this particular moment when he so desperately needed a confidante.

They were on their way, he soon learnt, to Lisbon, where Junot was to take up his duties as Minister (for Portugal, with its English sympathies, would need watching, and Junot could be relied on to employ firm yet conciliatory measures). Jerome thought the appointment an excellent one, and congratulated his friend, though agreeing at the same time with Laure that it was sad to have to leave Paris, especially with a young child. He was delighted with the little girl, who was as pretty as a fairy and seemed not in the least tired after her many days of travel. The governess presently took her away, and Jerome gave a hint to Le Camus, who had joined them, that he wished to speak to his friends in private. As soon as he had gone, Laure burst out:

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"Jerome, what is this we have heard about your marriage? Is it really true? Are you really married? Oh, what a naughty boy to marry without your mother's or your big brother's consent! Everyone says his anger is extreme—but extreme! Tell us. Tell us everything."

While lunch was preparing, he poured the whole story into their ears. The relief was immense. Laure's eager interest released all his most romantic feelings, and he saw himself as the persecuted and unhappy young lover, parted by cruel fate from his beloved. He dwelt at length and with fervour on the beauty and the amazing qualities of his Elise.

"Look," he said, pulling out the miniature, "here is her portrait, which I always carry with me. And let me assure you, it by no means does her justice. You should see her—you *must* see her. She is altogether exquisite. You would say at once that there is no one so beautiful."

Laure seized the miniature, and she and Junot bent their heads over it.

"Oh," she cried, "but she is beautiful! She is really, *really* beautiful, is she not, Andache? But Jerome, she is like Paulette. No, she is lovelier."

"Come, come," said Junot, who, before his marriage to Laure had been wildly in love with Pauline, and even now could never see her without emotion; "come, come, you will not persuade me that she is lovelier. That is too much." He took the miniature from his wife, smiling, and examined it more closely before letting her take it back again.

"Yes, yes," insisted Laure, with good humour, "she is lovelier. There is more—you will forgive me, both of

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you?—more spirit in this face, more wit, more brilliance. It is a face to dream about. My poor boy, how sad, how sad that you have had to leave her! You have all my sympathy.”

“It is terrible,” said Jerome, tears at once coming into his eyes. “My one hope in life is that I may be with her again soon. Without that hope, I could not go on. I could not.”

Junot put a hand on the young man’s shoulder.

“Courage, Jerome, courage. Do not despair. But at the same time, I think it right to warn you, if my dear wife will let me speak, that what you have done is serious, my boy. In the eyes of your brother it is worse. It is a crime.”

Laure delighted in this situation. She felt herself to be taking part in a most touching and romantic incident. It was so extraordinary meeting Jerome like this, in the middle of Spain, and on this errand to his brother. Could it possibly end by his being restored to the arms of his lovely American? She hoped so. Really, Jerome was an absurd boy, one never knew what mischief he was about to be in next. But if he perhaps lacked character—though she found him much changed, much improved—certainly he did not lack charm. She wished to see the romance end happily, but she guessed that Jerome would meet with some discouragement from her husband, who, after all, was attached to Napoleon by a hundred powerful ties.

“Surely,” the young man protested, “it is no crime to marry the woman one loves. And even supposing it were true, that I committed a crime in marrying Miss Patterson, must the punishment fall on the head of an innocent girl? It is not right. And surely it cannot be

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the wish of my brother to insult one of the most respected families in the United States."

"Ah, ça," said Junot, easily. "America, remember is a long way off. The Emperor is thinking in terms of Europe, of the duties of his family, and of the greatness of France."

"Abstractions," interrupted Laure, "which are not likely to influence a young man in love as our Jerome is in love. Nor, in my opinion, should they."

"I will not give in," said Jerome. "My cause is just. I am determined not to give in. And think also, what kindnesses I have received at the hands of the Patterson family—in fact, at the hands of all the Americans I have met. They are people with whom I wish to be friends. People I admire and esteem. I do not wish to lose their good opinion."

"If your cause is just, and surely it is," said Laure, "all must go well in the end. Take courage, Jerome, and be strong. Above all, be strong."

"You are advising him against all his best interests," said Junot.

"I am considering my honour and my happiness above my interests," was Jerome's answer.

They argued to and fro for some time, strolling up and down the little unlovely garden of the inn, with chickens scratching about their feet. Junot paused once to set his heel on a scurrying spider, and then said:

"I will talk with you again after lunch. There is still much to be said."

"Where I cannot hear you!" cried Laure, laughing. "Don't listen, Jerome, to what he says. He has no pity for hearts that may break. He is a soldier, only

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a soldier. His *métier* is war, not the emotions. You had far better listen to me than to Andache or to Napoleon."

"Hush, *petite peste!*" said her husband, and at that they all laughed, for it was the nickname Napoleon himself had given her. And at that moment a longing for the old days at the Tuileries came over Jerome, a longing that seemed to gnaw at the pit of his stomach with something deeper and sharper than hunger. Was he to be cut off from it all for ever? Laure brought it all back to him; and though her words encouraged and fortified him, her presence, with the memories that she evoked, made him feel home-sick and heart-sick as he had not felt for years.

"Very well," she said, "listen to him if you must, Jerome, but remember that all persons of delicacy and sensibility will be on your side. That is to say, all women will be on your side."

Le Camus, the child and the governess joined them at lunch, and they drank Spanish wine and ate a great dish of rice cooked in saffron, with chicken and peas and red peppers and shell-fish. When it was over, Laure went to lie down, but tired though she was, she first made a note of the events of the day for her diary. She had a shrewd little head, and was very well aware that she had unrivalled opportunities, as the wife of Junot, and constantly, therefore, at the side of Napoleon, for compiling a book of reminiscences that some day would be of enormous interest. So she recorded the meeting with Jerome at some length, and then wrote to her mother, with whom she kept in constant touch. "I fear," she said, when telling of the incident, "that Jerome, alas! will not show the strength

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of mind of his brother, Lucien, but in the end will obey Napoleon's wishes. He is charming, likeable, and sufficiently handsome, and you know I have always been fond of him, but I do not place much reliance on his strength of character, though I find him much improved. It is most interesting to hear him speak—as he does speak, in glowing terms—of all that he saw and did in America, to which country it appears, he has become strongly attached.”

After lunch, Junot walked and talked again with Jerome.

“A man's personal happiness,” the older man said, “that is all very well, but, my friend, too much is at stake to consider that. Your happiness, you will soon find, lies in serving your brother. It is extremely important for your future that you should remain on good terms with the Emperor. He has not forgotten you while you have been abroad. He has plans for you, I promise you, plans that I am not at liberty to disclose.”

Jerome touched his breast where the miniature lay. “This,” he said, “is of far greater importance to me. The happiness of my wife must be my first consideration, of my wife and of my child.”

Junot looked at him in surprise. “You did not tell us . . .”

“A child is soon to be born,” said Jerome. “You will understand, then, that I can do nothing which might one day cause me to reproach myself.”

“Ah,” said Junot, “I see, of course, how difficult your situation is.” He was silent for a moment. “I may as well tell you,” he went on, “that I intended to persuade you, if I could, to obey your brother's orders.

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But as it is, I will say no more. Every man must decide such matters for himself. Interference is dangerous. I can only wish you happiness, my dear boy, in whatever course you pursue."

And the two shook hands warmly, and parted, and soon Jerome and Le Camus were clattering away down the stony road that wound through the mountains towards Truxillo and the French border.

"Well," said Le Camus later, as they were slowly climbing a steep ascent, "it will be good to be in France again. We seem to have returned just in time. I heard much, from the General's suite, of the advancement of the Emperor's family. What a man! He will make kings and queens of you all before he is done."

Jerome made no reply, but sent him an angry look, and spurred on his horse. After riding for some time it struck him that with Paris so nearly on their route, it would be pleasant to stop there for a day or two and enjoy some of the glory that, as the Emperor's brother, would surely be his. It would be especially agreeable, after the cold reception he had received in Lisbon. But on second thoughts he decided that he dare not take the risk. His instructions were too plain, and it would certainly be known were he to make a detour by way of the capital. He looked forward with longing to the day when he would be free to please himself in all such matters.

When they crossed the Spanish border into France he felt a more than mild thrill at the sight of French infantry trudging along the roads, and, better yet—for Jerome loved handsome uniforms as a woman loves fashionable clothes—to see French cavalry in all the splendour of plumed helmets and shakos, riding

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through the villages with glitter and jingle and clatter, and every eye following them. It was not a bad thing nowadays, he thought, to be a Frenchman. And who had Frenchmen to thank for it but the man he was on his way to seek in Lombardy?

He felt more hopeful, now that he was in France. He thought with tenderness of Elizabeth, waiting for him in the *Erin*, so trusting, so courageous.

"I will write to her to-morrow," he told himself. "to tell her that I am once more in my own country, and that some day that country will be hers as well."

Meanwhile he was unaware that Napoleon had already been informed, by means of semaphores, of his arrival in Lisbon, and was finding time, in the midst of a thousand other activities, to write various letters concerning him and his affairs, one of which he sent in duplicate, to Decrès, the Minister of Marine, and to Fouché, then Minister of the Interior.

Monsieur Jerome Bonaparte has arrived in Lisbon, with Mademoiselle Patterson, his mistress. She must not be allowed to land in France, but must be sent back to America. As for Monsieur Jerome, I have ordered that officer to come to me by Barcelona, Toulouse, Grenoble, Turin and Milan, and he is to be arrested if he deviates in the least from that route.

And at the same time, with that astonishing inconsistency frequently to be found in dictators, he wrote to the Arch-Chancellor, Cambacères, and asked him what steps should be taken to annul the *marriage*. And he added:

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Please forward to me copies of the documents that it will be necessary for Monsieur Jerome to sign.

In the very midst of the arrangements for the ceremonial placing upon his own head of the Iron Crown of Lombardy, he thus found time to attend to the delinquencies of his youngest brother, who had "deserted his flag for a wretched woman". It was extremely annoying, then, to receive a letter from Cambacères saying that it would be a difficult matter to annul the marriage, which seemed to have been performed with the idea of making it as binding as possible. This called forth an angry and hasty reply from Napoleon. Married abroad, he wrote, a minor, and without publication of banns, there was no more of a marriage "than between two lovers who unite themselves in a garden upon the altar of love and in the presence of the moon and stars".

"Really," thought Cambacères, at his desk in Paris, "he cannot have it both ways. First it is a marriage and then it is not. I am asked to see that it is annulled, and then told that it does not exist. Well, it is not the first time that domestic feelings have destroyed logic, and it will not be the last."

On reaching Milan, Jerome, travel-weary and anxious, discussed with Le Camus the best way of approaching his brother. With every mile that brought him nearer to Milan he was realizing, more and more fully and sharply, the anger of Napoleon against him. He could picture the blaze at a distance, but not until now had he been able to feel the heat. On arrival, he paced the bedroom of his hotel, neckcloth loosened, his hair in wild disorder.

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"*Mon Dieu!* What a situation! He is about to be crowned King of Lombardy, like another Charlemagne, and he will be thinking only of the glory of France and of the duties and destiny of the family. I could not have arrived at a worse moment. Already I feel that my cause is hopeless. Nevertheless, I must see him at once. An hour's delay, now that I am here, will only make matters far worse."

But it was impossible, he found, to make matters worse. Le Camus, who was sent to Napoleon with Jerome's humble request for an audience, returned with a curt refusal and an armed guard for company. Jerome was not to leave his hotel. He was to consider himself under arrest. Nothing was required of him but a full and sincere repentance and the promise of entire obedience to Napoleon's wishes.

The young man threw himself on the bed, his face in the pillow. "Leave me," he said to Le Camus. "Go and amuse yourself. You at least are free. I want to be alone; I wish to see no one."

Le Camus, approaching the bed, pointed out to him, softly, quietly, that it was always wisest to bow to the inevitable.

"We know," he said, "that the Emperor means what he says. Nothing will move him. Nothing. Oppose him and you will be a prisoner, or at best an exile. What a fate for a young man at the very beginning of his career! If you obey him, everything is possible. How can you hesitate? What are the consequences of obedience? A few months' sadness. What are the consequences of opposing him? The ruin of your whole life."

"And yours," said Jerome from his pillow. "Get

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out! Leave me alone! Go away! When I want you I will send for you."

"I care for nothing but your happiness," said Le Camus. "Think what you please, but that is the truth, and you know it."

"Go away!" shouted Jerome, in a sudden burst of rage and misery. "Go away! I am sick of the sight and sound of you."

"I will be within call," said Le Camus, unruffled, and left the room.

When he had gone, Jerome got up and sat by the open window, watching the crowd with melancholy eyes. The streets were noisy with the cries of fruit-sellers, the sharp rattle of wheels on cobbles, the clatter of hoofs, the hoarse shouts of drivers, and the piercing voices of street children who called shrilly to one another and pursued their games under the very feet of horses and pedestrians. Jerome had never been in Italy before. Little by little his melancholy expression vanished. He became interested in the faces of the people, in the faces of the women particularly. He had been without a companion for many days now. It was a lonely business, living without a woman—without his Elise. What would she think of all this? Her clothes and boxes would by now have been scattered about the room; she would have spread one of her pretty cashmere shawls over the bed; her satin, chenille-embroidered jewel-case, in the shape of a little chest, would have been open on the table, with a necklace or a bracelet, perhaps, half in and half out. Elise had pretty, feminine ways. About her person she was as neat as a little cat, but she had always had slaves to wait upon her, and in consequence her bedroom, when they travelled, was apt to be splen-

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didly untidy. He liked it; feminine disorder pleased him. He loved to be surrounded by beautiful stuffs, by the odours of potpourri and fragrant ointments; he liked to see pretty, intimate linens and laces flung over the backs of chairs. He could interest himself keenly in the new setting of a jewel, or a miniature, the purchase of a comb, the colour and texture of a piece of moiré for a gown. He often bought Elise the blonde lace she so loved, and he himself chose her caps for the morning and for sleeping in. No, he was not meant to live alone, that was certain. He was no solitary. Unhappy though he was, he could recall, with pleasure, the prettiness of some of the Portuguese girls he had seen, walking, with remarkable grace, in their red cloaks, and with handkerchiefs pinned on their heads, along the dusty roads. The girls here were pretty too, and without that slightly Moorish look of the Portuguese girls. There was one now, crossing the street in front of the hotel with an elderly companion. A girl of good family, no doubt, for she was beautifully dressed and very prettily shod. She had a pair of enormous brown eyes that she suddenly raised, as though she had been conscious of his look, to the open window where he sat, sending a little shiver down his spine.

"*Tu es belle,*" he murmured, and wondered if she could guess what he said from the movement of his lips. But she was too far away, and also, probably, did not speak a word of French. *Tiens, tiens!* There was another, a blonde. . . . "And I am a prisoner here," he said to himself, springing up. "This is not very amusing for me. What am I to do? What am I to do?"

Once more, on the following day, he sent a letter to

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Napoleon, begging him, for the sake of the old affection between them, to see him, if only for a few minutes, but he received, this time, no reply at all. Napoleon was busy with other matters. Jerome paced the floor of his large, sparsely furnished sitting-room, beads of sweat standing out upon his forehead. He hated to make decisions. Why must such a terrible one be forced upon him now? Was it fair? "No man was ever so tormented," he said to himself. "No man ever had to decide so terrible a problem."

He knew that armed guards stood at the door of the hotel, and not wishing to see them or be seen by them, took his meals in his own room. It was useless to attempt to escape. Where was he to go? What was he to do? He might try to go to Amsterdam, and return with Elise on the *Erin*, but if he went like that, he went for ever. It meant exile for life, and he knew it. Once more he sent a letter by Le Camus, saying that if Napoleon would only recognize his marriage, would only consent to see his Elise, he would for ever after obey him in every particular, would live only to serve him and his country. This time Napoleon replied, and as follows:

Write to Miss Patterson [he said] to return to the United States, and I will allow her 60,000 francs a year, provided she does not assume the name of the family.

Once more, upon receiving this letter, Jerome flung himself upon his bed. He tossed and turned, and beat his pillow, sprang up, went to the window, stared out with unseeing eyes, then returned to toss and sigh again.

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"How can I write such a letter? It is impossible. How can I? It is impossible, impossible! What am I to do? I shall go mad here. It is too much, it is too much."

He got up, presently, and sat by the window again. He was beaten. He knew it. He was being violently, miserably, pulled in two directions. Towards his brother and a glorious future, and towards his wife and child. If he defied his brother, he would have to endure exile; which would mean leading a simple domestic existence in America, as an American, with Elise and her friends; a quiet family life, without honours or glory. As the exiled brother of a great Emperor, it was true that a certain amount of glamour, a certain interest, would attach to him, but would that suffice? Would it take the place of rank, title, action, an important place in the world of Europe! For even there, in his hotel bedroom, he could guess something of what lay in store for him. Le Camus returned from his excursions about the town with many facts or rumours. Elise Bacciochi, Jerome's eldest sister, was about to be offered the state of Piombino, and Elise had never been Napoleon's favourite. Napoleon did not like women who took themselves too seriously, who boasted of their learning, who were bookish, unfeminine, and these, certainly, were faults that Elise possessed. If she were to be given the state of Piombino, what might not he himself receive, as a reward for his obedience? In short, how could he cut himself off from a brother who was Emperor of France, King of Lombardy, Conqueror of Europe? It was too much.

No, he must not return to America. That would be to burn all his boats, to accept utter defeat. Who knew,

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who could say that it might not be possible, if he went cautiously, to have it *both* ways? If he temporized, urged Elise to wait and have patience, and at the same time obeyed Napoleon's wishes, might not the future be, perhaps, on his side? Who knew? Napoleon might be softened by his obedience. He might relent. Perhaps all this anger, this harshness, was merely to test his loyalty and his devotion. The idea found favour in Jerome's mind, and grew and took shape. This, clearly, was his best course; obedience now, in the hope of clemency in the future. Elise must be patient. She must wait; it was the woman's part. He was doing his best; no man could do more. If he were to return to her now and say, "I am beaten. We must return to America for ever," how would she receive him? If he knew his Elise, with scorn, with disgust. She, as well as himself, was ambitious. Better, surely, the hope of victory than the certain knowledge of defeat. He saw his way now. As for Napoleon's offer, that, if it must be sent to her, must be sent, not as if it came through him, but as if it came direct from Napoleon himself. Le Camus must carry it to Amsterdam. He would know how to present it, how to make it clear to her that he himself was helpless in the matter, a prisoner, and that their only course was, at present, to obey and to hope.

"All is by no means lost," Jerome said to himself. "I see now what I must do. If I show Napoleon how heartily I wish to please him, he may relent towards me and condone my marriage. He may consent to send for Elise—who will, perhaps, be in America—and we will be happily united again. I see that this is the only way. It is true that my child will be born at sea, but

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that cannot be helped. Elise is strong, she is very well, and she will have excellent care. Now that summer is here, calm weather may be expected. I see no reason to worry unduly. It is sad for her, it is sad for me, but at least there is hope. In fact I believe that with patience, all that we wish for may yet be brought about."

He brushed his hair, tidied his clothes, whistled a little tune, and with the relieved air of a man whose mind is at last, and satisfactorily, made up, sat down and began to write a letter to his brother.

The next day, while the *Erin* was still waiting off Amsterdam, Napoleon wrote a letter to his sister, Elise Bacciochi, who, with her husband, had just come from Paris to join him.

Monsieur Jerome has arrived. I am satisfied with his sentiments. His secretary, who is in Milan, is going to see Miss Patterson to persuade her that her marriage is null in the eyes of the law and of religion, and should therefore be so in mine. Speak to M. Le Camus and write in this strain to Jerome. Make him understand the necessity of keeping the promises he has made me.

So while Elizabeth curbed her impatience as best she could, ate sparingly of the *Erin's* dwindling stores, looked into the black muzzles of the guns of the French sloop and wondered when, if ever, she would sleep in a bed again, Le Camus, not at all disliking the errand, was preparing to travel from Milan to Amsterdam to see her, Jerome's instructions in his pocket. The thought of having been empowered to offer her, on Napoleon's behalf, a pension of sixty thousand francs

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a year, particularly pleased him. That, surely, would end the matter, and once the offer had been accepted, he could be certain of following his employer's career to whatever dizzy heights it might lead him without fear of future obstacles. For once having felt the heavy hand of his brother, Jerome was not likely to offend again.

Alas for the meeting to which M. Le Camus was so eagerly looking forward! Before he reached Amsterdam, the *Erin* had sailed. He heard the news with disappointment and a little chagrin—for he had lingered unnecessarily, perhaps, at an inn in the Pennines, where he had briefly consoled a young war widow of unusual charm. He went to see Mr. Sylvanus Bourne, and found that dry, humorous and laconic gentleman in his office. Mr. Bourne bore out what he had already heard. It was quite true, the *Erin* had sailed just eight hours earlier.

"And you ain't the only disappointed man in Amsterdam, I reckon," said the Consul. "Mr. Robert Patterson, Madame Bonaparte's brother, has just arrived too, hoping to see her. He'll be here in about ten minutes. You'd better wait."

He added, genially, that he hoped M. Le Camus had come with good news, but the secretary was not disposed to tell him what his errand was.

"I can only say," he informed him pompously, "that I bring a communication from the Emperor himself. Meanwhile, you can tell me, perhaps, where the *Erin* has gone. Has she returned to America?"

"I can only say," said Mr. Bourne in his turn, drawing some letters towards him as though the interview were at an end, "that she has sailed. I can't say more

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till I've seen Mr. Patterson, so I reckon that if you want to find out further details, you better ask him." He nodded towards the next room. "You'll excuse me," he said, "but I've got a mighty big correspondence to attend to. Perhaps you'll be so kind as to wait in there."

When Robert arrived, he welcomed him warmly, and then told him that he had come too late.

"I was privileged," he said, "to see your sister twice, and I did my level best to persuade her that her safest and best course was to sail for the U.S.A. But she's a young lady with a mind of her own, and her heart was set, Mr. Patterson, on going straight to England. Nothing I could say could make her alter it. So to England they went."

Robert, who had travelled far and fast in the hope of seeing Elizabeth, looked crestfallen. "Tell me everything that happened," he said. "I gather that my sister was anything but well treated here."

Mr. Bourne described the reception the *Erin* had received.

"Things got so bad," he said, "that I took it upon myself to advise them not to wait any longer. In fact, I was getting mighty worried. It came to my ears that Mr. Bonaparte was practically a prisoner in Milan and wasn't going to be allowed to return. What's more, there were some mistaken miscreants here in Amsterdam who were so anxious to curry favour with the authorities, that they were threatening her life, and I thought it best to tell Mr. William Patterson so. Your brother was for going on to Emden, in Germany, but Madame Bonaparte said she'd made up her mind to go to England. Well, I don't know but what I'd have

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done the same in her place. She wanted to be where folks spoke the same language, she said, and didn't want to risk crossing the Atlantic just now. I was mighty glad, for their sakes, when they got safely away. Mrs. Bourne says that the whole time they were here—and that was ten days—I acted like an old hen with one chick. I reckon I felt like that, too."

"You've been wonderfully kind," said Robert. "We can never thank you enough."

"Bosh! I haven't done a thing. I guess if you want to know their whereabouts in London, you'd better write to Mr. James Monroe, our American Minister. They said they were going to get in touch with him right away."

Robert once again thanked him warmly for all he had done.

"There's a gentleman in there," Mr. Bourne then said, indicating the door into the next room, "that you might like to see. He got here just too late, too. His name's Le Camus."

"Good God!" said Robert. "Is he here? Yes, I must certainly see him."

"Know him well?"

"He's Mr. Bonaparte's secretary. He's stayed in our house for weeks at a time."

"He says he's just come from the Emperor," said Mr. Bourne. "I didn't take to him myself." And he showed Robert into the room where Le Camus was waiting. The two young men bowed to each other without shaking hands, and then Robert suggested that they could talk just as well while they were walking towards the hotel where he was staying.

In his talk with Robert, Le Camus was surprisingly

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frank. He told him at once that the fate of the marriage was no longer in doubt. "Mr. Bonaparte conceives it to be his duty," he said, "to obey the Emperor's orders. He has sworn to obey him in everything."

Robert was fully prepared for this, but it was not pleasant hearing, especially as it came from Le Camus.

"I was afraid," he said, "that he had not the strength of character to withstand his brother for long. You are quite certain of this, I suppose?"

"That is, in effect, what I was sent here to tell your sister," said Le Camus. "There is a letter for her in my pocket from Mr. Bonaparte."

"Well," said Robert, "I cannot pretend that it has come as a shock. I was aware that both Mr. Bonaparte's mother and his brother Joseph had withdrawn their approval. The Emperor, of course, instructed them to do so. It is all very unfortunate."

It would have been pleasant enough, under different circumstances, to walk through the peaceful, cobbled streets of Amsterdam. Here and there, hanging from the windows of a house or shop, were Dutch flags and French flags together, but otherwise the town looked as it must have looked for the last hundred years. Tulips were in bloom everywhere, and fruit trees were blossoming above brick walls. But Robert was too much concerned with his sister's affairs to take pleasure in the quaint charm and neatness of the place. Also he was irritated to see, as he could not help seeing, how pleased Le Camus was at the turn events had taken.

"Where is Mr. Bonaparte now?" he presently asked.

"In Milan," Le Camus replied, "but in a few days he goes to Genoa. I am afraid," he added, "he will be greatly displeased when he hears that Madame . .

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that your sister has gone to England. He would have preferred her to go to any other country."

"I can assure you that as things are," Robert said, trying hard to keep his self-control, "it is a matter of complete indifference to my sister or to any of us whether he is displeased or not. She has been forced to decide for herself, and as best she could, under very difficult circumstances. I feel sure she has done the most sensible thing." He added, "You say Mr. Bonaparte has gone to Genoa. Why Genoa? What is there to take him there?"

"He is about to rejoin the fleet," said Le Camus, complacently. "He is to be made an Admiral, by the Emperor's orders."

Then Robert's temper went. "I didn't know the French still had a fleet," he said, acidly. "I understand that the English are scattering it to the four corners of the earth."

"In that case," retorted Le Camus, "I fancy you will shortly be surprised to find out that not only has France a fleet, but that it can act."

"I shall indeed be surprised." The two strode along for some minutes without speaking. Even the pallid face of Le Camus was slightly flushed. When they reached the door of the inn, Robert said coldly:

"If you will give me the letter you spoke of, I will give it to my sister. I am shortly joining her in England."

"I regret," said Le Camus, stiffly polite, "that I cannot do that. My instructions were to give it to your sister. As I am now unable to do so, I must return it to Mr. Bonaparte."

"But I tell you I am shortly going to England," said

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Robert, looking at him angrily, "and will give it to her myself."

"I must obey Mr. Bonaparte's instructions."

Robert flashed him a contemptuous look, then turned on his heel and left him, with the words:

"The sooner my sister is clear of the lot of you, the better."

He walked fast for half an hour before returning to the inn. Then, feeling a little calmer, he made preparations to leave for Paris the following morning, for he still had some duties to perform there for his father before going to England. He had grown much older, much more mature, during the year that he had been abroad. He had had great responsibilities, and had performed them with tact and discretion. Everywhere he went people liked him and thought him an admirable and attractive young man. His natural gravity and single-mindedness had preserved him from the many temptations that had come his way, and he had been neither frivolous nor extravagant. And not for a day, scarcely for an hour, had he forgotten the child Mary Caton. He knew, as certainly as if he could see into the future, that she would some day be his wife, and that she would bring him the utmost happiness. And the letters he wrote to her were such as he might have written to a girl of twenty, except that he said nothing whatever of his love.

CHAPTER VIII

MEANWHILE the *Erin* was being buffeted in the Channel, and Elizabeth was summoning to her aid all her courage, all her natural optimism, all her pride. It was impossible that things could really be as black as they now seemed. There must be light, there must be help somewhere. Jerome had evidently been unable to get in touch with her, but he would find a way. He would find friends, surely; he would find influential persons who would intercede with Napoleon on her behalf. And as soon as he gained his freedom—for she assumed that he was a prisoner—he would act.

Part of her brain eagerly built up these hopes; another part coldly destroyed them as soon as they were built. Sometimes when she was alone, she would pace up and down the heaving floor of the little saloon, with the palms of both hands pressed against her temples, thinking, thinking, arguing with herself, to and fro, to and fro. There was hope; there was no hope; she was already abandoned; it was impossible that she could be abandoned. "I must stop this," she would say to herself. "It is bad for me. I must be calm. It is impossible that I, Elizabeth Patterson, should be cast aside, and deserted. Such a thing could not happen to me. I must have confidence in my own charms, in the strength of Jerome's affection for me. He will be loyal, I know he will. I must have patience."

William had not approved of their going to England, and she had had a struggle to get her way, but in the

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end he had been won over by the thought that in London she would be under the protection of their father's friend, Mr. James Monroe—the friend, too, of their uncle, General Smith, for the two had sat together for some years in the Senate. Mr. Monroe had already been Minister to France, and had indeed been largely responsible for the purchase of Louisiana from that country. He would be able to give them the best possible advice, and would certainly make Elizabeth's welfare his own concern. Perhaps, on the whole, Elizabeth knew what she was about.

Mrs. Anderson had no reason for wishing not to go other than the terror the thought aroused in her. Ever since Mr. Bourne had told them of Napoleon's plans for the invasion of England, she had dreaded the thought of going near it. She foresaw alarms by night, fire, sudden death, rape, and towns and villages put to the sword. But her fears made no impression on Elizabeth, and when Mrs. Anderson wailed, "Oh, let us go home! Let us go home!" she said, "Home is the very last place I wish to see now. If you insist on going home, I'm afraid you must go alone."

And just two months after so hopefully sailing out of Baltimore Harbour and into the Patapsco, the downcast little party were thankful to find themselves in the Dover Roads. Napoleon might come with ships and guns, but at least he had no authority over them now. They were in England.

Off Dover, an English frigate hailed them—Mrs. Anderson quailed, half expecting a shot to be fired—but as soon as it was known who they were and why they had come, they were treated with all courtesy and kindness, and were only asked to proceed along the coast

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as far as Deal, where they would be given permits to land.

In Deal harbour, their application for passports was most promptly dealt with, and permits to go ashore reached them from London in three days. Then Elizabeth, for the first time, saw her name in a foreign paper, when one of the officers of the port brought her the *Morning Chronicle* containing the following item:

It was reported yesterday that Mrs. Jerome Bonaparte had arrived in the Downs and had applied to Lord Hawkesbury for passports to land, she having been refused leave to land in Holland. It is added that passports were immediately sent down to Deal to permit her to come ashore.

Brief announcement though it was, it was enough to arouse the curiosity of the whole countryside. It was not the first time they had heard of her; previous notices had appeared telling of her arrival at Lisbon and the harsh treatment she had received there. Now, word of her presence in Deal harbour spread and spread, and people came flocking to the little town to see the American wife of a Bonaparte, the young woman who had drawn upon her innocent head the wrath of "Bony", and who was soon—poor soul—to be a mother.

"The poor dear! What a shame!" "They say she's a great beauty, and rich, too." "What a way to treat a lady!" "What can you expect from a pig but a grunt?" "Well, she's safe here, at any rate. Even Bony can't touch her here."

The news got about with amazing rapidity. There

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was little going on, just at that moment, to satisfy the craving for excitement. A man had, it was true, walked over the cliff at Seaford and been dashed to pieces, and a miscreant named Turner, who had tried to defraud the Bank of England, was to be executed that day at Newgate; but Newgate was too far away for the good folk along the south coast, and here, at their door, was a beautiful young creature excluded from all the Continental ports by England's chief enemy simply for the crime of having loved his youngest brother. A sad, thrilling, romantic story. There was a rush to see her land. Accounts reached London of the fast-growing crowds, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Pitt, firm hater of Napoleon and all his works, made haste to pay her homage by sending a military escort down, with orders to see that her progress to London was unimpeded. So when the *Erin's* boat, containing the lovely refugee, reached the little quay, soldiers were lined up on either side to make a passage for her and to keep a space for the officials who were there to receive her. And the crowd, peering and pushing and struggling for a good view, had the satisfaction of seeing the fair American bid a warm farewell to the Captain of the brig, and a brief and cold good-bye to a French gentleman—said to be a doctor—who was returning to France by the first packet that could take him across.

Among those who were waiting to welcome her were Mr. James Monroe and his wife. They had posted down from London with all possible haste as soon as they heard of her arrival, and no sooner had she stepped upon the quay than her hands were seized by a tall, thin, distinguished-looking man with a prematurely-lined, young-old face and kindly, deeply set blue-

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grey eyes. She guessed at once who he was, even before he introduced himself, though she had not seen him since she was eight years old. Beside him stood Mrs. Monroe, a fashionably dressed woman with a pleasant enough face but a somewhat affected manner. One glance at her convinced Elizabeth that she resembled several matrons of her acquaintance, and that a friendship with her would be unrewarding. But Mr. Monroe greatly impressed her by his courtly and charming manners and elegant appearance.

"We've taken rooms for you at the City of London Inn," said Mrs. Monroe, who talked very fast, "for we thought, as you were strangers here, we'd better make the arrangements at once. *Sur-le-champ*, as the French say. And this is your brother, Mr. William Patterson! I'm so very happy to meet you, sir! *Enchantée!* And Mrs. Anderson. We've heard of you, too. The papers have been telling us quite a lot about you all since you left Lisbon. You're famous people now."

"Your sister," said Mr. Monroe to William, "has nothing to fear in *this* country, where defenceless women are not persecuted. I trust all her troubles and hardships are over now."

A charming gentleman, Mr. Monroe, about whose sympathy and kind friendliness there could not be an instant's doubt. He congratulated himself on having returned from Madrid—where he had been negotiating for the purchase of Florida—just in time to greet his countrywoman. In fact he had barely, Mrs. Monroe said, had time to *s'établir un peu*. He treated Elizabeth as an indulgent uncle might have done, and she felt warmed and comforted by his attentions. Mrs. Monroe was no less friendly, though living in Paris, it seemed,

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had turned her head; but Elizabeth then, as always, preferred the interest and sympathy of men to that of women. Her slight contempt for the ordinary female, the mere wife and mother, the tame, domesticated creature, increased as she grew older. She felt it now, even though the woman in this case was the wife of the American Minister to Great Britain. For was she not, when all was said, merely her husband's echo and appendage?

But it was very pleasant and gratifying to be the object of all this fuss and attention. She could scarcely believe, though she was assured of it again and again, that these crowds pressing round, staring, commenting and sometimes setting up a thin cheer, had come for the sole purpose of catching a glimpse of herself.

"It is something here, too, to be a Bonaparte," she thought. And in that moment, as the little party walked from the pier to the inn where coaches waited to take them to London, she made up her mind that it was a something she could not and would not dispense with. She would not, if it was within her power to avoid it, give up her right to that name. "I must succeed," she said to herself, "in winning one victory at least over Napoleon." And after all the suspense and misery through which she had lately passed, after all the bitter humiliations, this astonishing and unlooked for reception charmed and fortified her as nothing else could have done.

The three weary travellers and their kindly escorts spent a night on the way to London at the pretty little village of Tonbridge—a blissful night in soft, motionless, well-shaken and well-aired feather beds, and, to the three Americans, this was a joy not to be described. No

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more heavings and creakings and rollings, no more trampling of sailors' feet overhead, no more hauling of ropes to shouted orders, no more waking in the blackness of stormy nights wondering and fearing, reminding themselves, when hearts quailed a little, that they owned a good captain, a stout brig and a reliable compass. All that was over now, and would fade in their memories a little more each day.

For the first time, Elizabeth knew the unpretentious comfort of a good English coaching inn. Her bed was warmed for her—for the night was chilly—and a brisk fire lighted in her room. Maids, whose rich accents pleased her, waited upon her in their brightly coloured calicoes, starched aprons and big frilled caps, round-eyed with awe and interest, and the landlord, who was already aware of her name and her misfortunes, made her a little speech of welcome. First impressions of a new country are ineffaceable. Other impressions, vastly different perhaps, may be formed later, and may exist side by side with these vivid, permanent, original ones, but they are powerless to destroy them. Elizabeth's first impressions of England could not but be favourable; she was touched by the kindness she met with at every turn; she was delighted by the *Englishness* of all that she saw. England was so very much more English, she laughingly said to Mr. Monroe, than she could even have imagined; the people, the cottages, the villages, the inns, the countryside; all were uniquely, unmistakably, overwhelmingly *English*. It was a something that permeated and pervaded the whole, as a flower is pervaded by its scent, and was everywhere triumphant.

"If I had been blindfolded and dropped here," she said, as they sat at supper, "and the bandages suddenly

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taken from my eyes, I would have known after a single glance what country I was in. Anyone who has read English books and seen English paintings must be amazed at their power to portray the English scene. It's almost as familiar to me as Baltimore—but how infinitely more pleasing! ”

Mr. Monroe was a little shocked at her lack of enthusiasm for her own country, and rallied her about it more than once.

“Come, come!” he said, on this occasion, “it surprises me to hear from the lips of its loveliest product such disparagement of the land that produced it.”

“You must take me as you find me,” she said, with her quick little smile. “I have no love for the crude and the raw. I had better confess to you here and now that I am no ardent patriot like my father or my brother or Mrs. Anderson. Or like the vast majority of my countrymen. There it is. I cannot change myself. In my own country *je m’ennui, je m’ennui, je m’ennui!* ”

“*Quant à moi,*” cried Mrs. Monroe, “though I mustn’t, of course, say it publicly, I would give *anything* to be in Paris again.”

Highly receptive to new influences, quick to observe new things, Elizabeth felt, after sleeping one night at Tonbridge, as if she had been acquainted with English inns all her life. Already the mingled odours of floor-wax, roast beef and boiled greens seemed familiar to her; as familiar as the dark halls with their marbled wallpapers, the panelled rooms with their sporting prints and shining coppers and brasses; the low ceilings, the creaking stairs, the brisk clatter of hot-water cans in the early mornings. When she got up and looked

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out the next day she was not surprised to see, spread below her window, a lawn like a pile carpet of rich emerald on which thrushes were looking for worms, and bordering it, trim beds full of tulips, wallflowers and forget-me-nots. She was somehow prepared for it all, as she was prepared for the hedges foaming with may, and the astonishing blue of the wild hyacinths that lay, like a fallen mist, among the tree boles. This was the England she had expected to find. Even the birds which appeared to follow the coach, flitting along from hedge to hedge and tree to tree as it travelled up to London, seemed to her an integral part of the English scene.

"I was born for Europe," she said to herself, "and Europe shall be my home and the home of my child. If I cannot go to France, I will live here. But surely they cannot keep me out of France for ever."

Even now she was thinking of herself as a woman alone. Already her mind, without instructions from her conscious self, was beginning to perform the healing mental surgery that was necessary if she were to be abandoned without too much agony and shame. Already she was half aware, in some dim region of her brain, that she must learn to rely solely upon herself, and look well to her own affairs. Something that was a by-product of days and nights of doubt whispered it to an inner ear.

Mr. Monroe, sitting beside Elizabeth in the coach, gave her the news of the day. England, he told her, was not unduly excited over the possibility of an invasion from France. She placed great reliance upon the Navy, and the Navy was more than fulfilling her expectations.

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"Bonaparte knows very well," he said, "that without control of the Channel, his beloved scheme of invasion might turn into a national disaster. He's far too wise to attempt to strike without the support of his ships. So no one worries very much. If you want to know what subjects are most occupying the mind of the country at the moment, I would say, the King's health, India, and the question of Catholic Emancipation."

"It all sounds peaceful enough, certainly," Elizabeth said.

Her interest in the Royal Family, he found, was very great. She wanted a detailed and minute description of the King, the Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, the Duke of York, the Duke of Clarence, and then of all the most socially important persons in England.

"Whom," she asked, "if I moved in society here—which, at present, of course, I am unable to do—should I most wish to meet?"

He did his best to reply, and she remembered his answers. He thought it astonishing that this young woman whose bright hopes had been so cruelly darkened, whose situation was so precarious, could take such a lively interest in the fashionable world. Here, undoubtedly, he thought, were uncommon qualities, uncommon courage and resilience. (His wife was not altogether sure that she liked their distressed countrywoman, and preferred talking to her brother, or Mrs. Anderson, but Mr. Monroe, she knew, looked upon her as a veritable heroine. Men were like that.) Moreover he thought her the most beautiful creature he had ever seen. He had visited the Pattersons at Homewood on one occasion a good many years earlier, but could

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only recollect a large brood of very lively youngsters, among whom, try as he might, he could not now recall the lovely child she must have been.

For Elizabeth's sake, their progress to London was slow and careful. The journey began to seem very long indeed when they clattered at last over Vauxhall Bridge—where the sun, shining through London smoke, and its reflection in the Thames, were a dull copper—and made their way through narrow, crowded streets, congested with an astonishing variety of vehicles, to the City of London Inn, where rooms had been taken for them.

"I shall not want to stay *here* for my confinement," was Elizabeth's first thought.

It was a pleasant enough place, a rambling old building of many rooms and many additions, but crowded in among other buildings and neither very quiet nor very light. She found it comfortable enough inside, and thanked Mrs. Monroe very prettily for having gone to so much trouble.

"It will be the very thing," she said, "for a few days, and until I am rested, but under the circumstances I would be better out of London, I think. Isn't there perhaps some quiet, genteel suburb where I could find comfortable lodgings?"

They assured her that there were any number of such places, and, for its nearness to the centre of things, its convenience and quiet, they suggested Camberwell.

"It is only half an hour from Charing Cross," said Mr. Monroe, who sometimes visited friends there, "and yet there are lanes where you can still hear the nightingales."

"It sounds precisely what I want," said Elizabeth,

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and arranged with Mrs. Monroe to drive her there to look for rooms as soon as she felt sufficiently recovered from the journey.

Camberwell suited her excellently. It was refined, unspoilt, rural; it even had a certain air of elegance, and it possessed a charming village green surrounded by weeping willows. Looking out upon the green, and enclosed within their own gardens, were a number of pleasant vine-covered houses which were clearly the homes of gentlefolk, and near at hand, in Park Place, Elizabeth found comfortable lodgings for herself, William, Mrs. Anderson, and later Robert, if he should come from Paris to join them.

She engaged them at once, and undertook to occupy them within two days. The prospect of her approaching confinement did not at all dismay the landlady, who assured her that she had sponsored, under that very roof, the arrival of some of the scions of England's noble houses.

"But never before a Bonaparte," Elizabeth thought.

As soon as the landlady heard her name, she opened her eyes very wide (and her mouth too, William said later, for her charges were certainly high). Still, it was a desirable situation and suited their needs admirably, and not more than ten minutes' walk away lived the famous Dr. John Lettsom, of whom they heard, on every side, the most favourable reports. He lived in a villa of a quite extraordinary kind, with an ornate front adorned with emblematical figures of Flora and the Seasons, and surrounded by a garden full of temples, statues and curiosities. There were many amusing stories about him. Being an enthusiastic Latinist, he signed his prescriptions I. Lettsom, and

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some wag, the landlady told them, had composed some lines of doggerel which the doctor himself was fond of repeating:

“When any patients call in haste,
I physics, bleeds and sweats 'em;
If after that they choose to die,
Why, what cares I?

I. Lettsom.”

This lovable eccentric was at once captivated by Elizabeth's beauty and by her misfortunes, and the two struck up a friendship, for Elizabeth had a way with elderly men. His interest in her was immense, and he attended assiduously to her comfort and well-being, recommending, as her accoucheur, the distinguished Mr. Aveline, who had attended members of the Royal Family. He begged her to visit his house whenever she pleased, and take a little gentle exercise by walking in his garden. By ascending a few shallow steps she could seat herself, on warm days, in a temple he had erected to the Sibyls, which was raised several feet above the ground and supported by the trunks of eighteen oak trees. She would be, he assured her, the garden's most lovely ornament, and he begged her to look upon it as her own.

It was in Camberwell, at the beginning of June, that Elizabeth first heard the nightingale; a song, she remarked, feeling in a far from sentimental mood, that was vastly overrated. For no letters had come from Jerome, and she was arming and arming herself against a defeat that, when it came, might strike too hard for her enduring.

“I . . . I . . . Elizabeth Patterson, the most beautiful

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girl in Baltimore . . . in America . . . to be treated so. To be humbled in the eyes of the whole world . . . to be discarded . . . betrayed, like any village maiden. What will they all think? What will they all say? Oh, no, it is impossible! It could not happen to *me*. But if it does? Then Jerome is a coward and a poltroon, not worthy of a moment's anguish. A fool, a poltroon, a miserable, weak *creature*. How I should loathe and despise him! But, oh, the humiliation, the unbearable humiliation. . . ! ”

One day towards the end of June, when she had returned from a little drive about Camberwell and Dulwich, she found a letter waiting for her in a wholly unknown hand. It came from London, and from a fashionable part of it, and it bore a most heartening message. The writer explained that she was a great friend of a certain Lady Donegal—“a lady who is not, I understand, personally known to you”—who was now residing in Genoa. She had there met Mr. Jerome Bonaparte, the youngest brother of the Emperor, and he had begged her to be the means of conveying to England a message to his wife, to whom he was not permitted to write. “Tell her,” the message had run, “that I am as much attached to her as ever, and that she must be patient and hope and trust.” That was all. It was indeed a pleasure, the writer said, to be able to convey these words to a lady who had been so unjustly treated, and who was forced to endure so cruel a separation from her husband.

“But I implore you,” added the writer, “to mention my name to no one, nor the name of Lady Donegal, for if it should become known that we are conveying messages to you from your husband, the Emperor or

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his agents would, I feel sure, at once find means to put a stop to it."

With this letter in her hands, Elizabeth felt her whole position to be considerably strengthened and improved. It came at a most welcome moment, for in spite of the many kindnesses shown her by the Monroes, by Dr. Lettsom and by one or two Camberwell acquaintances, in spite of the arrival of Robert from France, she was feeling dispirited and discouraged, and the birth of the child was near at hand. It gave her fresh hope; her heart warmed towards Jerome as it had not done for weeks past. It was *true*, then, that he was not permitted to write. It was *true*, then, that he was almost a prisoner—even though an officer in the French Navy. (Robert had told her that.) At any rate, here was something to show to her brothers, to the Monroes—who could, of course, be relied on to say nothing—above all, here was something to tell her father. "He is as much attached to me as ever," she wrote him. "He has not given up hope."

Would it be a boy or a girl? That question began to assume greater and greater importance. If a girl, then she feared that her cause must be greatly weakened; if a boy, then—who could tell? He might some day find himself heir to the Imperial Throne of France. There were, so far, few male offspring in the Bonaparte family, and should her child be a boy, her own importance and his in the eyes of Napoleon and his family might become unexpectedly great. Oh, if only, if only it might be a boy! She prayed for it; prayed to the only god in which she was able to put her faith—in providence, or the god of luck. Surely Jerome, as soon as he heard that he was the father of a male child, would redouble

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all his efforts; would love and value her even more than before; would become firm in his determination never to abandon her.

She read, she walked a little, she drove about the neighbouring lanes with Mrs. Anderson, visited the lovely old church of St. Giles, in Camberwell (although she took little interest in antiquities, she liked living in those countries where they were to be found!) and ate the famous Camberwell strawberries in Dr. Lett-som's garden. Robert and William frequently went up to London by coach and, on returning, told her all that they had seen. They saw the King one day; they had seen the Prince of Wales more than once.

"A fat, dissipated-looking man," Robert said, "and dressed up in the richest and most resplendent clothes you ever saw. He must spend a fortune on dress."

They soon found that what Elizabeth liked best was gossip about the famous and the fashionable, and although not moving in London society, but merely sightseers, they did their best to collect stray bits of information for her, and, being ardent Republicans, took some pleasure in describing to her what they had heard of the dull and stuffy virtues of the Court, and the wildness and extravagance of the Prince and of the Dukes.

"Some day," Elizabeth thought, reserving her opinion, "I shall probably meet the Prince of Wales and see for myself what he is like." And with her habitual fondness for being "*au courant*", as she would have put it, with the news of the day, she read the London papers with great thoroughness and so gained a considerable knowledge of the world of fashion and of politics.

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On the sixth of July, a warm, still, sultry day, with the songs of birds very loud and sudden in the garden and heavy clouds moving slowly across a dull sun, Mrs. Anderson sent William hurrying off for Mr. Aveline and Dr. Lettsom. The latter came at once, bringing a mid-wife with him, and Mr. Aveline an hour or so later, and all was done that could be done to assist the suffering girl. But the baby was not born that day. Mr. Aveline went home at last, and took some sleep, and returned at five in the morning, wondering a little that he had not been called in the night. And at seven, on the seventh of July, a fine boy was born, as fine a boy, he vowed, as he had ever seen in all his life. He was much surprised that Madame Bonaparte, although such a slight, delicate-looking young lady, came so well through a rather difficult time. As soon as it was all over, and the baby placed in her arms, she smiled and said, "It was time luck was on my side," and lay very contentedly, as though she wished for nothing more. But presently she opened her eyes and asked the doctor about her figure. Would it suffer any change, she wanted to know; would she be as slim and graceful as before?

"Bless you," Dr. Lettsom said, "nowadays ladies' looks improve with the birth of children. You'll be handsomer than ever, I promise you that. And then what will become of us poor men?"

Her brothers were highly delighted with her, and thankful that all had gone well, for they had felt that a heavy responsibility rested upon their shoulders. They, too, felt that her position must now be improved, though Robert would admit no more than that.

He had been fond of Jerome—it was difficult not to

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be—but he could barely conceal the contempt he now felt for him. Had he stood up to Napoleon, had he, like Lucien, defied him (and Lucien's wife, Robert recalled, was a woman of slightly tarnished reputation, without wealth or position), had he placed the happiness of his marriage before everything else, he could have loved, admired and respected him. But he was not Lucien; he was merely a pleasure-loving, ambitious youth who followed the easiest path and to whom the word "glory" was irresistible.

Robert felt he knew all the Bonapartes now, and indeed his year in Paris had been a liberal education. They were an extraordinary family. They had excellent manners, great charm, and they were nearly all extremely handsome; Elise Bacciochi was perhaps the least endowed with the Bonaparte good looks. All, with the exception of Lucien, were highly ambitious. He had observed with surprise, for he was young, that they both criticized and worshipped Napoleon, and that, even while worshipping, they were jealous of his fame and success. They wanted everything he could give them, but were not a little humiliated that, by themselves, they were capable of accomplishing nothing. Elise played with literary societies, and cultivated *savants*. She and Lucien alone made an attempt to lead lives of their own. All were jealous and highly critical of Josephine, who had not, indeed, one real friend among them, and even Madame Mère had some harsh things to say of her, though she tried to be a model mother-in-law. Certainly the brothers and sisters bickered and quarrelled among themselves like a lot of warring states; yet they were quite capable, at moments, of making sacrifices for one another and of displaying

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the sort of love that shows itself best when there is danger from without. Pauline, Robert thought, had the least likeable character, though possibly her love for Napoleon was greater than that of the others. She was stupid, self-willed, beautiful, passionate, immoderate. He thought her completely brainless, and, on the one occasion when they had met, her conversation, though charming enough in its way, was of an incredible vacuity. And over all this diverse, ambitious, vital family reigned Madame Mère, devoid of pettiness, devoid of personal ambition, far-seeing, philosophic, watchful, shrewd; and in the midst of the love of splendour and the grotesque extravagance of her offspring, remaining as cautious, as parsimonious, even, as a peasant.

He had had a unique experience of them all in Paris—except Napoleon, whom he never saw—and he sometimes felt he knew them as well as he knew his own family. He wrote long letters about them to the child, Mary Caton, and perhaps aroused in that little breast some of the longing for the world of Europe which she later displayed. It was curious how he could write to her more freely and fully than to his parents or to people of his own age. But he was an unusual young man, very self-contained, very dignified and full of a curious kind of sagacity. He pursued his own path quietly and firmly. He was never in doubt, never pulled two ways. To Elizabeth he was a puzzle, though she much preferred his society to William's. And it was far easier to talk to him about Jerome, from whom messages continued to come, through the kind offices of Lady Donegal's London friend, fairly often.

And in these messages Jerome still protested that he

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loved his Elise above all else in the world, that all his thoughts and hopes were centred upon her and upon their son. How much, Elizabeth wondered, was it wise to believe?

"I believe in his love, yes," she said to Robert, "but not in his strength of character, and in the end everything will depend upon that."

And then the news reached England of Napoleon's anger with the Pope. The papers published it abroad, and Elizabeth could not but feel a certain satisfaction in the fact that she herself was the cause of it.

"A Pope and an Emperor are quarrelling about me." The thought did not displease her.

The Emperor, it appeared, had written to the Pope towards the end of May, requesting him to publish a bull annulling Jerome's marriage. To make assurance doubly sure, he sent, with the letter, a gold tiara.

Both the gift and the letter were unworthy of Napoleon's tact and genius. The letter falsified the facts, the gift falsified the letter.

He spoke of his young brother and of "Miss Patterson, who calls herself his wife"; and in describing the marriage, said: "A Spanish priest" (he knew perfectly well about the Reverend Bishop Carroll, America's first Catholic Bishop) "so far forgot himself as to pronounce the benediction. . . . I could easily have this marriage broken in Paris," the letter went on, "since the Gallican Church pronounces such marriages null. But it appears to me better to have it done in Rome, on account of the example to sovereign families marrying Protestants. I beg Your Holiness to do this quietly, and as soon as I know you are willing to do it, I will have the marriage broken here by civil process. It is important for France

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that there should not be a Protestant young woman so near my person."

But the Pope, after careful and exhaustive search, could find no precedent for such an annulment. The marriage, upon investigation, appeared to have been performed with all the formalities required by the Church.

In short, Pius the Seventh could not see his way to yielding to the Emperor's requests, and so informed him, in a long and carefully worded letter, written nearly a month later.

Napoleon was exceedingly angry—it was not the last time the Pope was to resist his wishes—and turned to his own Council of State to do what the Pope refused to do. By that obedient body the marriage was declared null and void, it having been contracted without the consent of Jerome's guardians and while he was still a minor.

So the Pope was flouted and Napoleon got his way without the aid of the Church. And Jerome continued to send messages to Elizabeth, and even, somewhat later in the summer, to write tender, hopeful letters (for what had to be done, should be done, he resolved, gently and gradually), calling her loving names and imploring her to trust him and never to give up hope. "I prefer you, my Elise," he said, "to a crown."

"But what does he mean?" Elizabeth asked Robert. "Does he think that the Emperor will relent in time, and that we can then be re-married? Or does he prefer to think that we are still husband and wife? Why does he never say? He avoids the subject. I would much prefer him to speak out."

She had still scarcely recovered from the birth of the

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child, and Robert, like Jerome, felt that the truth about her situation had better be made known to her gradually, so, though he had no doubt himself that Jerome considered the marriage at an end, he preferred to give vague replies and avoid expressing his real opinions.

There never was an instant's hesitation in Elizabeth's mind about a name for her son. He was Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte from the first moment she was told that it was a boy. He grew and thrived and delighted his mother and his two uncles by his strength, his intelligence and his good disposition. When he clung to Robert's forefinger, that young man, whose instincts were wholly domestic, wondered how soon a son of his own might grip it in his tiny fist. He was indeed a splendid child. Mrs. Anderson could never take him out without people crowding round—for all Camberwell knew now who he was—and begging her to uncover the child's face, whereupon there would be a chorus of admiring exclamations.

"Such a beautiful little fellow!" "See how he smiles at me!" "What a lovely baby!" "And is he really named Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte? The poor little mite! Only think of it. And such a lovely, innocent babe!" "Oh, ma'am, mayn't I hold him in my arms just for a minute? Then I can tell my children that I dandled a nephew of Bonaparte's!"

Queer folk, the English, Mrs. Anderson thought. Crowding round and admiring the nephew of their greatest enemy, the man who might still perhaps—but please heaven, not until she was safely at home—stamp them all under his iron heel. Just as soon as a nice reliable woman could be found she was going to beg

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Elizabeth, who talked of spending the winter in Camberwell, to let her go back to America. Her homesickness had now become a disease; and at night there were those dreams of landings by torch-light, screams, shots, blood, horror. Oh, to be once more on the dear, remote soil of Maryland! Would that longing ever be fulfilled?

It was fulfilled, indeed, far sooner than she expected. Elizabeth was grateful to her for her help, but now could not see the last of her quickly enough. The doctor found her a good nurse for the child, and all that remained was to find a boat for Mrs. Anderson.

In the middle of August, Elizabeth wrote her father a long, formal letter—she always wrote to him as though he were her lawyer rather than her father—telling him the news up to date, and giving him, as was her habit, some counsel and advice.

ENGLAND,

August 14, 1805.

DEAR SIR,

Mrs. Anderson is extremely anxious to return to America, and as she will be no material loss, she takes her departure in the *Robert*.

We have at length concluded on remaining here the winter, but not in London, as my going into public or showing myself would be highly improper. I have received no letters from Bonaparte since he has seen the Emperor. He wrote to me from Madrid and Mount Cenis, which is near Milan, where the Emperor then was, but on his arrival his brother refused to see him, and he is now cruising before Genoa. . . . They have had poor Bentalou [he had acted as Robert's inter-

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preter in Paris, and had done his best to aid the Patterson cause] in the Temple, but he is liberated; they took from him a letter from you to Bonaparte, and I have never been able to get a single letter sent to him. I am sure, likewise, that Thurreau has orders to try and sound you with respect to my consenting to a separation from Bonaparte on certain conditions; but as we have no reason to suppose that he will ever consent to give me up, we must certainly act as if we suppose him possessed of some principle and honour.

. . . We imagine that Bonaparte is in some measure a prisoner, and we must wait patiently to know how he will act; in the meantime it would be extremely imprudent for me to go out or see anyone, and I must avoid getting into any scrapes which I might be led into from thinking that he would desert me. No matter what I think, it is unjust to condemn until we have some certainty greater than at present, and my conduct shall be such as if I had a perfect reliance on him. I think that by returning to the United States it would seem as if I had yielded the point, and by next spring everything will be decided.

. . . We received last evening a letter from Garnier at Genoa; he says that Bonaparte desires me to return to the United States, that he will be absent from me a year or eighteen months, and that he strongly objects to my staying in England. But we think it is a trick of Garnier's and that Bonaparte knows nothing about the letter—especially as we know Garnier to be a villain. The Emperor has offered to give me twelve thousand dollars a year

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during my life [it was through Le Camus that she heard of this] on condition that I would return to America and give up his name. I request you will not mention this proposal; I have never taken the smallest notice of it. . . . You must place no confidence in what the English papers say, as they often publish that I will appear in public when I am sitting quietly in my room.

I remain, dear sir, yours,

E.

Rather more like the letter of a man of affairs than a deserted young mother of twenty. Already she was beginning to display that capacity for planning, for cool thinking, that was soon to become a habit with her. Not one word, even, about the baby, now five weeks old. And not a word of complaint. Here, certainly, was a display of those unusual qualities that Mr. Monroe had not been slow to perceive in her.

Mrs. Anderson sailed, with thankfulness, on the brig *Robert*. Then William sailed, a few weeks later. Robert, still writing by every boat—he took care to acquaint himself with the goings and comings of ships—to his family, and to Mary Caton, stayed behind with his sister.

The summer declined into autumn. They witnessed the annual Fair on Camberwell Green, an astonishing sight, where costers, gipsies, farm labourers, villagers and a good many folk from London, turned night into day, and the Fair, before they were done, into a Saturnalia. The army that was later to inscribe Ulm and Austerlitz upon its banners still waited in the sandhills of Boulogne for the ships that never came. Between England and France, it seemed, it was at present

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stalemate. England was as determined to restore the Bourbons to France as Napoleon was determined to bring, with his Army (if only his Navy would let him), "liberty and equality" to England, and in so doing, to humble his most stubborn and most powerful enemy. Plenty of dissatisfied persons in England—and there was ample reason for dissatisfaction—said, "Let him come. The sooner the better." Elizabeth heard rumours of this talk and wondered what sort of people they could be who could wish their country devastated by a war of invasion. But she had never seen the poverty of England; only the wealth, the power and the prettiest country-side in the world.

She looked upon war as a necessary evil and folly. Necessary, because evil and folly were part of the make-up of men, and until men learnt wisdom and virtue, wars there would continue to be. And she had little hope that they would ever learn. She looked upon men in the mass with contempt; upon individuals—upon successful and brilliant individuals—with exaggerated respect and admiration. And the Emperor, whose name was on everyone's lips, grew and grew in her eyes to gigantic proportions. If her own path were to be so cruelly blocked, it was something, at least, that it was blocked by a creature of such titanic power. He was *her* antagonist, as he was Great Britain's, and as he was half Europe's. He had considered her important enough to crush. If she were to be beaten, it was something, surely, to be beaten by a Napoleon.

And when one day that autumn he took his great army out of the sandhills of Boulogne and transported them, in thousands of carriages, through France to the Black Forest, to meet the threat of the Allied Armies

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massing against him thtre, she held her breath. Did this mean defeat for him? There were those who believed it might. And then came the smashing, colossal victory—judged by the bodies of dead and dying men—of Ulm. Napoleon, the papers said, had taken sixty thousand prisoners, had slain half that number, and had lost but fifteen thousand of his own troops. Was there ever such an astounding being? Even though, to accomplish it, he had had to give up for ever his hope of invading England. For after Ulm came Trafalgar, and England went wild (there would be time, later, to mourn for Nelson). All night long people built fires and danced and sang and shouted on Camberwell Green, and Robert drove up to London to see the sights there, and lost a hat and a watch and a night's sleep, but got a thrill out of it all which on returning he imparted to Elizabeth.

In the pause that followed, reassuring letters began to come from Jerome—for the Emperor was so busy elsewhere that he felt, perhaps, that he could write with impunity—showing, between the lines, the uncertainty and confusion of his mind. For his feelings were like the battleground of Europe, and struggling armies contended there, swaying this way and that, even though the fate of the day were already decided.

“My dear and beloved wife, life is nothing to me without you and my son.” (She remembered these words much later, when she heard of the lovely little Genoese, Blanche La Flèche!) “Be tranquil; your husband will never abandon you.” And he wrote in another letter:

“I love my country, I love glory; but I love them as a man who, accustomed to fear nothing, never forgets

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that he is the father of Jerome Napoleon and the husband of Elise." (A trifle bombastic, Elizabeth thought.) "I embrace you as I love you, and I love you as my life." And again:

"Believe, my Elise, that my first thought on rising, as my last on falling asleep, is always of you; and if I were not sure of the happiness of rejoining my well-beloved wife, I should cease to live."

She disbelieved, and yet was comforted. She got this last by heart. "*Crois, mon Élise, que ma première pensée en me levant . . .*"

These expressions of devotion were chiefly strengthening to her pride, her self-esteem. They soothed, while they failed to convince. And then there came another letter, so totally different, in such an altered vein, and with such an underlying severity, that Elizabeth was astonished.

If you go to the United States, I wish, these are my orders, that you keep four horses, and that you live in a suitable manner and as if I were on the point of arriving; inform your father that I love him as if he were my own father, and that I desire that these things shall be so, and that I have particular reasons for it. Further, if the Emperor wishes to send you money [he had not mentioned this before] you must not refuse; that would only irritate him, I would suffer from your refusal, and that would retard our affairs. I have much hope, but one must not allow oneself to believe. For the rest, dear wife, depend upon me; I do that which I must, and I will succeed, I trust, in my objects. Believe, my dear wife, that I work and I suffer only

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for you and my son. Let others say what they will. Elise, I embrace you a thousand times. My compliments to my brother Robert. Tell him that I desire that my wife shall be treated with all tenderness, and that I confide to him the happiness of my life, my wife and my child.

All very well, all very well, but what was behind it? Much, Elizabeth thought. Very, very much. Those four horses . . . she couldn't keep four horses, with all that they implied, unless she accepted the Emperor's offer of a pension. And if she accepted that . . . if she accepted that . . .

She saw well enough where it led. Was it a trap? Surely he must see that once she accepted a pension from the Emperor it could only be construed as an admission that she agreed to give up her husband for ever. It would write "finis" to the whole affair. Couldn't he see that? Or did he think that she might not?

She saw the four horses as bait. They were meant as an inducement to her to return. It would soften the blow if she were to be set up with a house, and horses and carriages; it would look as though she were still the wife of a member of the Emperor's family. It meant that she need not live obscurely, as a discarded mistress.

"Be a good girl, go home, do as the Emperor says, and you shall have four horses. . . ."

That was the gist of the letter; all the rest was padding. She saw it quite plainly. It was his way of softening the blow. So she said to Robert, as they strolled about the lanes of Camberwell, watching the

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small yellow leaves flutter down from the elms, and he thought the time had come to agree with her, to keep up the pretence no longer.

Meanwhile, Mr. Patterson wanted them to come home, and said so. He and Mrs. Patterson were longing to see their grandchild. They believed that the battle was already lost. And Mr. Patterson considered that pride, dignity and expedience all decreed that the time had come for her to return to her own country.

Elizabeth and Robert discussed the question day after day. He was for going back. Her own feeling was, "Can I endure it? Must I really face Baltimore and humiliation? For that is what it amounts to. Even my father—will he refrain from saying, 'This is exactly what I expected would happen'? Can I endure it? Can I endure it?"

She could endure almost anything, she thought, but that. And yet, was there any way of escape from it? She was living in England at her father's expense. Could she defy him and stay, and still expect to receive money from him? And, at the same time, if there were even the smallest hope of a future with Jerome, she might only prejudice it by remaining longer than was necessary in England. Everything, she had to admit, everything but her own pride, seemed to point towards home.

And after all, what more could people say than this: "She was defeated by the man who has defeated kings and countries and legions." Or: "She was sacrificed to political considerations." It had a certain *ton*. ("He that would make a Great Man must learn to turn every accident to some Advantage.") It was difficult enough

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to see what other advantage could be reaped from such a cruel repulse as she had had to suffer.

"I was forced to obey the Emperor's orders; but so were those vast armies at Ulm."

The report of Napoleon's speech appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, and she read it with admiration.

"Soldiers of the grand army! In fifteen days we have concluded a campaign. We have kept our promise. We have chased the troops of Austria from the Bavarian territories and have re-established our ally in the possession of his states. That army which, with so much ostentation and presumption had advanced to our frontiers, is annihilated. But what signifies that to England? We are no longer at Boulogne."

No, the French were no longer at Boulogne. Mrs. Anderson might have stayed without fear. England would not be disturbed.

It was dull at Camberwell, and she dared not accept the invitations from London that began to reach her. She was taken notice of by some of those people whose names Mr. Monroe had mentioned in the coach. But the papers would report her comings and goings—for she was news—and she dared not show herself. Robert was growing restless; an industrious young man, he felt that he was wasting his time. Everything pointed to a return.

With a little English nurse, Robert and the baby, she set sail in November, leaving behind her a Europe whose fate was still unknown; a Europe where armies still marched, marched, marched to the grim polonaise of war.

CHAPTER IX

THE years that followed were the bitterest of her life. That return to Baltimore. . . . She thought she would never recover from the humiliation of it. She knew now, in that deep recess of the heart where no pretences are, how she had flaunted her happiness and her triumph, two years before; how she had "put on airs", played the little queen and looked down upon her less fortunate friends. Yes, she knew that she had. Well, all the more reason, then, to show nothing of her feelings now. Let them dare to triumph over her! She had a tongue, and she would use it; she had pride enough and spirit enough to hold up her head. What other American girl had been given a military escort on landing in England, and been greeted by crowds and cheers? How many American women had ever been thought important enough to have their way barred to them by ships and guns? How many had been offered a pension by an Emperor? And had ignored it? These were things they had better remember. And for a year or more she could maintain the fiction—fostered by himself, but taken at its true value by her—that Jerome meant to return to her or send for her to come to Europe. There were letters that could be shown. As late as July, 1806, he was writing to her in his old, affectionate way:

I write you only a word, my dear and well-loved Elise. I am well, and full of deep regret at being

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so many leagues from you without being able to enjoy the happiness of seeing you. I embrace you with all my heart. A kiss for Napoleon, and my compliments to your family.

They only received his compliments now. Not long ago he had sent his love. He had been made a Prince of France a year before, and, after his brothers Joseph and Louis, heir to the Imperial Throne (but this she heard only at second-hand). He told her little of his personal affairs, spoke only of his health, and his continued devotion. She knew what reliance to place upon that. She had no illusions now. Ambition had won the day, as, she supposed, it had won it a million times before. The issues were plain enough now.

She settled down as best she could in the house in South Street. Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte joined the children in the nursery—when had there not been babies there?—and fat old Aunt Caroline took him, with pride, to her bosom. Mr. Patterson was so delighted with his grandson that he felt somewhat recompensed for all that he and the family had suffered owing to Elizabeth's high-handedness and folly. The antagonism between father and daughter persisted, though it was concealed under a cloak of formality and politeness. "My house is yours, my daughter. You are welcome here under this roof for as long as you care to stay. We think alike about nothing, your aims are not mine, your values are not mine. But you are my eldest daughter, I have always done my best to promote your welfare, and I will continue to do so. I beg you to look upon this as your own home, and to be a comfort to your mother, and a good sister to your brothers and

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sisters. Your child is a delight to us. We must try to let bygones be bygones."

This was his attitude, unexpressed, or not expressed in so many words. Hers was:

"Nothing but the might of an Emperor could have forced me to return here. I came unwillingly; I remain unwillingly. When I can, I will return to Europe. It is true that I have nothing of my own—that I am dependent upon you for everything—but this may not always be the case. Meanwhile, you must take me as you find me. I do not intend to alter. I dislike this country, which has no charms for me. I am not, and never will be, a typical American. As soon as there is peace in Europe, I will find some means of returning to it. I am happy to have this temporary haven for myself and my child, but it can only be temporary. I will do my best, meanwhile, to adapt myself once more to a family life for which I have even less taste now than formerly. It will not be easy."

It was not easy. Only between her mother and herself there was more affection than before. Her mother did not criticize her. She had furthered her marriage as best she could, she had always been on her side. She loved her beyond all reason, and Elizabeth could not but be touched by this love. But, as always, there were the children, two of them delicate and requiring much of Mrs. Patterson's care. And Aunt Spear, a little more critical and energetic than before, was still with them.

Her greatest difficulty was with her brothers. William had not exactly turned against her, but he set himself up as her mentor, and seemed to think her quite incapable of forming a sensible judgment about anything. He infuriated her to such an extent that they scarcely

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spoke to each other. He had grossly exaggerated, in her opinion, the part he had played as her guardian in Europe, and she found that his accounts of the happenings in the ports of Lisbon and Amsterdam by no means coincided with hers. In fact, but for William, it seemed, they would all of them have been at the bottom of the sea. Or so it appeared to Elizabeth. George followed William in most things, and was constantly giving her sly little digs, but Edward, a handsome boy of about fifteen, showed her much affection. Robert, as usual, went his own way, a trouble to no one. He was constantly at the Catons', and seemed to belong far more, Elizabeth felt, to that family than to his own. She tried to pick up the threads of friendship with some of her girlhood friends, but after her condescensions of two years earlier, this was not always easy. They remembered, if she chose to forget. But Mary Barney had sufficient humour and understanding not to hold it against her.

"Her head was turned. She was only eighteen. At that age who can be blamed for putting on a few airs? For my part, I have only affection for her, but she is so apt to mistake affection for pity that it makes things very difficult."

Elizabeth got on best with Mrs. Caton, who, she said, was the only *femme du monde* in Baltimore. Certainly her own mother was not one. Mrs. Caton was ambitious for her daughters, and Elizabeth still believed in ambition.

"If one brings children into this world," she said, "one must push them on and plan for them in every possible way. Otherwise they had better not be born at all."

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It was clear, already, that she meant to push on and plan for "Bo", as she now called him.

To have called the child Napoleon would, of course, have been ridiculous. Napoleon, however much she might admire him—and she did, excessively—was the destroyer of her happiness. As for Jerome, that was her husband's name, and was therefore best left alone at present. She herself, in playing with the child, had hit upon the name Bo, and it pleased her. So Bo he became, and when people mistook it for Beau—which suited him well enough, for he was a lovely child—she carefully put them right, explaining that it was short for Bonaparte.

It was a matter of intense pride and satisfaction to her that he so resembled the pictures of the Conqueror as a child. He already had the large head, straight, dark-brown hair, serious eyes and well-formed features of his uncle. "*Il est tout à fait*," Elizabeth wrote to Henrietta Rewbell (who, with her husband, was officially attached to Jerome's suite, though he was still at sea), "*il est tout à fait un petit Napoléon.*"

She talked to him, from his earliest years, in French, and her own speech, as was very much the fashion with those who harboured no doubts about their pronunciation, was liberally interspersed with French expressions. Her father considered this a displeasing affectation, and frequently remonstrated with her for it.

"I should think," he said, in his blunt way, "that you'd want to forget that language."

"But why?" she asked. "It will be so useful to me when I return to Europe."

She went out occasionally in what she called, with her quick little smile, the *haut ton* of Baltimore society.

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but took little pleasure in it. It seemed to her but a weak, poor imitation of that far better, more brilliant society that she had so nearly made her own. She could not accept what she conceived to be the shadow because she had lost the substance. Altogether it was a bitterly disappointing and boring existence for a girl who had meant to live at courts.

How nearly she had come to being a Princess of France! She lay awake at night, thinking, "Was there *anything* we could have done? Did we leave anything undone? If Jerome had written to Napoleon at once, asking his permission to marry me, the letter would have reached him while he was still First Consul. Would he have given his consent then?"

Her mother's health continued to be poor, and Elizabeth and Aunt Spear—assisted, now, by pretty eighteen-year-old Margaret—ran the house, with some of the old, subdued discord. Elizabeth once overheard Margaret say to a young girl friend, "Poor Betsy! If I had married a man I'll wager he wouldn't have given me up for any old Emperor," and she found it hard to forgive her. That, no doubt, was what all the young women were saying or feeling. It was their revenge for never having had the opportunity.

"What I suffer here, what I suffer!" she cried out to Mrs. Caton, and Mrs. Caton tried to comfort her.

"I know, poor child, I know. But perhaps it won't be for long. You'll go back to Europe, I feel sure of it. You weren't meant for this life, any more than my girls were. They'll spread their wings and fly far away one of these days. But not," she added with a smile, "as high as you flew, my dear."

Then, at last, Elizabeth's patience came to an end.

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She felt suffocated there. She had no money of her own, and hated asking for it. "Father, I would like to go to New York. May I have three hundred dollars?" And he would look at her from under his eyebrows and say, "It's a lot of money. What do you want to go to New York for?" She could endure it no longer. As far as one can be certain of anything in this world, she was certain that her marriage was now, definitely and for ever, a thing of the past. Jerome did not mean to return or to send for her. All that was over. And unless she was to live for the rest of her days the dependent of her father or her brothers, she must bestir herself; must make herself independent in the only way that was open to her, which was to accept the situation and to take up again with Napoleon the matter of her pension. She once more asked her father for some money, therefore, to go to Washington, and through General Thurreau, the French Minister there, expressed her willingness to accept the Emperor's offer of sixty thousand francs a year for her own maintenance and for the maintenance and education of her son, asking, at the same time, in view of all that she had suffered and for her son's sake, that she be allowed to keep the name of Bonaparte.

Once this was done, she felt happier. It had been at the back of her mind for so long, unresolved. Now, as soon as a letter could reach Paris, and an answer could reach Washington again, which might be within two months, she would be a well-to-do and independent woman, able to come and go as she pleased. Not that she meant to have the four horses Jerome had insisted upon. Certainly not. That would be the wildest and most absurd extravagance. She would save, invest, and

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prepare for a happier future. She was the mother of a Bonaparte and must make plans.

"Living most of the time in my father's house, as I shall do for the present," she explained to Madame Tussard, with whom she stayed when in Washington, "I should be able to put by at least three-quarters of my annual income. Properly invested, I ought to be able to save enough to make the future tolerably secure. For though my father is a wealthy man, ours is an enormous family, and it is unlikely that he will be able to do much for me, even if he were disposed to, which he is not."

Madame Tussard was a lady she had met while in Washington on her honeymoon. She had come there from San Domingo, where her husband had made a fortune out of sugar. She was a cultured, intelligent, kindly person; worldly—or Elizabeth would not have been attracted to her—but worldly in a not disagreeable sense. Her house was always open to "Madame Bonaparte", and she felt for Elizabeth a lively admiration and a very sincere affection. Madame Tussard's point of view was one with which Elizabeth wholly agreed. "We live in this world; let us therefore be of it. Why live in it and scorn its benefits and privileges? That is the attitude of people who know that these things are beyond their reach."

She returned to Baltimore, flirted half-heartedly and a little condescendingly with one or two young men—"Do they really imagine that I could love them—even marry them? There's no end to the conceit of man"—and waited for the reply from France. It came at last, and it was wholly satisfactory. The Emperor had no objection to her using the name of Bonaparte as long as

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she did not attempt to enter France, and the sixty thousand francs would be sent to her annually through the French Minister in Washington. The Emperor regretted, the letter said, that he had been obliged to use her with such severity, but political considerations had rendered it necessary. It was almost an apology, and she treasured it. She resolved to wait a little while and then, again through the French Minister, to ask Napoleon to interest himself in the education and upbringing of his nephew, "who should, as a French citizen," she said to her friends, "be educated in France. It is quite possible that the Emperor will agree."

She had now become a person of position and means. She was not only a Bonaparte by right and by the Emperor's consent, but a woman of wealth. But she had no intention of squandering that wealth. She lived precisely as before, except that if she chose to spend a few days in New York (she was an excellent and tireless traveller, and, when on a journey, seemed to shut herself up in a sort of mental trunk, feeling no discomforts), she did so. And she began to take a really enthusiastic interest in investments.

"The Bonaparte family may not reign over France for ever," she said to her father; for had not the last decade or two seen a good many sovereigns hurled from their thrones? And he most heartily agreed. He had never put much stock in the majesty of kings. She had long and frequent consultations both with her lawyer and with her father—whose business acumen she respected—but did not always take their advice, for even at twenty-two she had a surprising flair for rising values and often confounded her elders by her trick of being right. The money that she put aside grew

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and grew. She soon began to derive an income from her savings, and it was her ambition, one day, to be able to live upon that income, investing the whole of her allowance.

It was in October, 1807, that they heard the news of Jerome's second marriage. He did not inform them himself of the arrangements, which must have been going forward for some time, but they heard rumours of them from the papers, and from returning travellers. Napoleon had been busy carving a kingdom out of Germany, and meant to hand it, on the point of his sword, to his youngest brother, who, though he had been present at these operations as a General (he had quite lately been an Admiral of the fleet) had not greatly distinguished himself there. But it was the Emperor's desire to surround France with kingdoms ruled over by his family, and Jerome had been chosen to rule Westphalia. The next requisite was a queen, and after some bargaining, the daughter of the Elector of Würtemberg (raised by Napoleon to kingship) was chosen. The Pattersons heard of this first as a mere rumour—Elizabeth had two correspondents who were in the Bonaparte circle—then as an accomplished fact. There had been a royal wedding. Nothing, indeed, could have been more royal. For not only was Catherine of Würtemberg the daughter of a king, no matter how lately made, but—and this was somehow even more impressive—her stepmother was the Princess Royal of England, daughter of King George III; and her aunt was the Empress of Russia.

So Jerome was to be connected, at his brother's command, with the reigning house of England! Nor had Napoleon shrunk from the marriage because the bride-

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to-be was a Protestant. Once more he had shown that lack of logic often inseparable from dictatorship, in not this time objecting to "a Protestant young woman so near my person".

There was much in all this to arouse the anger and disgust of the Patterson family. Jerome was the first Bonaparte to make a royal marriage, and Elizabeth suspected that he would make the most of the fact. "Dear me!" she thought. "He wore royal purple, white satin and diamonds for our wedding. What on earth can he wear that will be suitable for this one?" Madame Lallemand who, as the wife of a French official, had been present at the Baltimore wedding, was also, by a curious fate, to be present at the wedding at the Tuileries, and from her Elizabeth later heard all the facts. It was a long letter, highly satisfactory in that it described in great detail and not without a touch of malice, all that the bride did, said, looked, wore. From this lady, Elizabeth heard about the ugly, German wedding-gown, made of a bluish-white moiré, with an awkward, badly cut little train, "like the tail of a beaver".

She and Jerome [wrote Madame Lallemand] first saw each other at Raincy, the country estate of Monsieur and Madame Junot, outside Paris. The marriage had, of course, already taken place by proxy at Stuttgart. Poor Catherine spent the night at Raincy, and there Jerome was presented to her. I very nearly witnessed their meeting, but luckily, remembering that the sight of me might recall to Jerome another marriage, and so make him more unhappy than he must already be ["She is being

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tactful," thought Elizabeth], I excused myself just in time. But I was present, of course, at the wedding itself. Nothing like it has been seen in Paris for years, and the splendour of the gowns and of the jewels was enough to take one's breath away. As for the bride herself, I am convinced that Jerome can never love her, but she is kind, good-natured, simple, and not without sensibility.

There was some comfort in this for Elizabeth, but there was more pain. There, but for the will of Napoleon, would have stood Elizabeth Patterson, the first American queen . . . it was hard, hard to bear. And Jerome, it seemed, had surpassed the costume he had worn in Baltimore! He had been all in white satin and gold, and his breast was covered, Madame Lallemand had said, with the decorations given him by Napoleon. "They ought to have had engraved on them, 'For a good boy'," thought Elizabeth.

Well, it was impossible not to suffer, but it was at least possible to suffer ironically, and to tell herself that she was well rid of a coward, a weakling, a puppet. But what other man, she sometimes wondered, would not have done the same in his place? Was she being wholly fair in condemning him, human nature being what it mostly was?

"A French Prince," Napoleon announced, "is about to reign on the Elbe."

Reign? Jerome reign? He was barely twenty-three. It wasn't possible. It wasn't in him. Perhaps Catherine would do the reigning. "If only I were there, if only I had been his wife, we might, between us, have made a success of it. But without me . . . well, if it fails, so

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much the better for me. Why should I care? "

But she had to hide her hurt, and go down to Homewood, taking Bo and the nurse. She could get no peace in Baltimore, amidst the curiosity or sympathy—equally hard to bear—of her family and friends. Everyone wondered how she was taking it. Well, let them wonder. She would suffer alone. Would she ever again know peace of mind? What peace could there be for a woman so tormented, so embittered, unless, either through indifference or nobility of character, she could succeed at last in shedding all that must otherwise wound and chafe her, and so forget and forgive? Elizabeth could do neither. She had possessed too lofty a pride, she had suffered too cruel a fall. She was too ambitious, perhaps too human, certainly too imperfect and vulnerable a creature. Hers was not the nature to be humbled and softened by adversity. The heavier the blow, the more she hardened herself to bear it.

So Jerome's obedience was rewarded by a kingdom and a royal bride. And, such was Napoleon's thoroughness, a ready-made constitution as well. The young king had been instructed by the Emperor, Henrietta Rewbell wrote, to perform miracles, and to make Westphalia an example of good government to all the states of Europe. Elizabeth, when she heard this, smiled her brief little smile.

And now she could picture the utter delight and satisfaction of Le Camus, Garnier and Meyronnet. How overjoyed they must be! Their fortunes would be made now; for Jerome rewarded his friends. General Rewbell (a somewhat enigmatic person; Elizabeth had never been quite sure whether she liked him or not) was

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on Jerome's staff as aide-de-camp, and Henrietta was able to keep her informed of much that went on, poking fun, now and again, at Jerome, at Catherine and at the somewhat opera bouffe court that was to be theirs. She could not, she said, take all this grandeur very seriously. Westphalia, which she had not yet visited, seemed to her a sort of cardboard kingdom, erected overnight, and likely to fall to pieces as speedily. The young couple spent nearly four months in Paris after the wedding—Jerome enjoyed honeymoons—and were then to visit Catherine's father, the forthright, brutal King of Würtemberg, of enormous size and gargantuan appetite. ("Jerome will soon be telling him he loves him like his own father," thought Elizabeth.)

"I suspect," Henrietta wrote, shrewdly enough, "that the main purpose of Westphalia will be to supply France with soldiers, and with money. However, we shall soon be living very royally at the palace of Wilhelmshöhe, which the King" ("Good heavens!" thought Elizabeth, "she means Jerome!") "has re-christened Napoleonshöhe."

She described Catherine as "one of the simplest people I ever met, and her delight in her marriage and in her husband is really touching. She lives only to please him. And this is all the more surprising as she was so very reluctant to marry him at first, and had, in fact, quite other hopes."

"She will never be able to keep his affection," thought Elizabeth. "Poor woman, I ought to pity her. He would have been faithful to me because he so loved me and admired my beauty, but why should he be faithful to a woman whom he did not choose?"

If only this pity had been sincere! For however

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much she might scoff at the "cardboard kingdom", the contrast between the sort of existence enjoyed by Catherine and that endured by herself in Baltimore was almost unbearable. She could not say to herself—"They must live their lives; I must live mine. Why should I compare it with theirs? What are they to me?" Her spirit seemed to be bound to Jerome, and to Jerome's life and to his family, and could not free itself.

"We are very gay here," wrote Madame Rewbell, from Napoleonshöhe—that great barrack of a palace—"and dine and dance and put on fancy dress almost every night." And Elizabeth would think:

"What is there for me here? Only dullness and mediocrity; the homage of a few merchants, a few citizens who have no interest for me, and tea-parties and soirées that would make anyone who is used to European ways smile, or weep. I might as well be dead."

And yet each year she seemed to grow more lovely, though in a way that aroused men's admiration rather than their love or passion. Men who confused virtue and frigidity and saw virtue only in frigidity, were enthusiastic in her praises. She was a Venus, a Diana; she was as perfect as a Greek statue. And when she showed that she could discuss politics international affairs and finance, they were astounded. They boasted of having met her. She was becoming a Baltimore institution, a show-piece. Visitors asked, at once, to be introduced to her, or, if they were too humble, merely to be shown the house where she lived.

"I am a sort of monument here," she said bitterly.

She now placed all her hopes in Bo, and cherished him not merely as a lovely child, but as a cause. In

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him she felt that she not only possessed an affectionate and thriving boy, but a link with all that seemed to her illustrious and splendid. He was the vehicle, now, of her dearest hopes and ambitions. "What I have lost you shall some day gain," was in her eyes when she looked at him. She could not for one moment separate him from the great Napoleonic polonaise that for ever sounded in her ears.

Mr. Patterson knew this, and it worried and irritated him.

"Bo is an American boy," he said, when Elizabeth expressed a wish to educate him abroad, "and some day will be thankful for it."

"Bo," Elizabeth answered, "is less an American than he is a Frenchman, or a Corsican. He has a French father, a half-Irish mother"—for Mr. Patterson was born in Donegal—"a Scotch-Irish grandfather and a Corsican grandfather and grandmother. And he was born in England. How can he be an American?"

"He will be an American," Mr. Patterson replied, stoutly, "because he will choose to be."

If only she did not oppose him in everything, if only she would abate her pride and regret her folly, he could have shown himself the most loving of fathers. Once, in a temper, he said:

"What you never think of, what you have never even said thank you for, is the money you have cost me. What I spent on you and that worthless Frenchman would keep half a dozen families for life. All thrown away. All utterly thrown away."

"You're not the first father to spend money on his daughter," she told him, "though you speak as though you were."

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"All the money that was lost in the wreck of the *Philadelphia*," he went on, "all the money I gave you so that you could travel about like royalty, the money it cost me to send you to Lisbon . . . all wasted, thrown away. The pity of it!"

It was not meanness. In a good cause, he would have had no regrets. But *wasted* . . . no returns . . . yes, there was Bo. There was only Bo.

Sometimes the wealthy Robert Gilmor—"the only man of taste and culture in Baltimore," Elizabeth said of him—came and dined with the family, or stayed with them in the country, and he and Elizabeth discussed books and poetry and pictures, and alternately disagreed with or flattered each other's taste. Although a merchant, like her father, Gilmor gave time and thought to other things than buying and selling and town-planning. He was a great friend of Gilbert Stuart, the painter, who, at Jerome's request, had begun portraits of himself and of Elizabeth while they were on their honeymoon. But Mr. Stuart was overwhelmed with orders. He wished to please everyone. He was in his hey-day, and hurried from New York to Philadelphia, from Philadelphia to Washington, painting, painting. He had made three studies of Elizabeth's head on one canvas—a charming trio—and meant one day to paint a portrait from them, but could never find time, there were so many pressing orders.

"If you can get the studies away from him, I shall be thankful," Elizabeth told Gilmor. "I no longer expect a finished portrait. It would be of no interest to anyone now. But if you can persuade him to give up the picture, just as it is, you will have my warmest gratitude."

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After repeated requests to Stuart to part with the sketch, Gilmor at last succeeded in obtaining it, and the three heads came to South Street.

"When those were painted," Elizabeth said to Gilmor, who came to see them hung in the drawing-room, "I was completely happy. I suppose no one was ever happier. The one on the right is the one I like least. It is too heavy, too mature; it is as I may look in twenty years, if I live so long. But the other two are myself, the centre one most of all. That is the girl with whom Jerome fell in love."

"She is far handsomer now," said her admirer.

She sighed. "*A quoi bon?*"

"My dear, dear young lady, all your life is before you."

She had a moment of prophecy, clear and convincing.

"I believe I am destined always to be thwarted. In everything I undertake. It is there, in those three faces. Don't you see it too?"

"I see nothing," he said, "but a beautiful and hopeful girl with every charm; with grace and intelligence; born for a high destiny."

"Born," she said, turning away, "for disappointment."

In June of the following year, a strange letter brought by a stranger envoy, reached Baltimore. When Elizabeth heard that a Monsieur Le Camus had landed the evening before, her heart gave a great leap, then the blood ebbed from it, so that she felt suddenly faint. What had he come for? What did Jerome want of her? She knew, for Henrietta Rewbell had told her, that Alexandre Le Camus had been given the title of

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Count Fürstenstein (which name, Henrietta added, poor Le Camus was quite unable to pronounce correctly), and unless he had discarded this upon arrival—which, knowing him, she thought unlikely—this visitor must be his brother. Le Camus, it seemed, had taken all his family to Westphalia, to partake of the good things that were to be had there at the Court of Jerome. But this man was a Le Camus, and she knew, therefore, that he had come on business that concerned her. Her brain busied itself with all sorts of conjectures. Then, during the morning, a letter was delivered at the house addressed to her father, and hardly able to endure her curiosity, she sent it down to the warehouse by one of the servants. So that not until he came home for dinner, at two, did she learn the contents.

She saw at once that her father looked perturbed and indignant. He took the letter out of his pocket and handed it to her.

"Here's a queer business," he said. "William glanced at it for me, but you know his French is poor, so maybe I haven't got the sense of it. You'd better read it to me and tell me what it says."

It was from Jerome. She quickly translated it for her father, and then her mother came into the room, and it had to be translated again. They could hardly believe that she was not making some mistake. She read aloud, for the second time:

"Mr. Patterson, I am sending to the United States Monsieur Le Camus, to go in search of my son, and to bring him to me. This proceeding is authorized by the Emperor, and you will easily perceive that he is interested in preparing for him

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a life suited to his birth and his rank. Brought up under my eyes, in the rank to which he is entitled, he will at least soften the grief that I feel so far from his mother, and without doubt the time will come when he will be able to repair all the harm that has been done in the interest of the high political considerations which I have been obliged to respect. In my position and in that of Elise, it is important that my son should be near me. You have too much wisdom not to appreciate the reasons for this, reasons which concern the delicacy of my situation as much as that of your family. I do not conceal from myself how painful the separation will be to Elise; but I count upon you, monsieur, to point out to her all the advantages which must result from it, and to persuade her not to oppose the happiness of our child. I hope to embrace him before the month of September. I have instructed M. Le Camus to shorten the journey as much as possible. And now, Mr. Patterson, may God preserve you in His sainted care."

Mr. Patterson could hardly believe his ears.

"They have the impertinence . . . the effrontery, to demand that *they* shall have the bringing up of *my* grandson! And they expect *me* to persuade *you*. . . . They're crazy. Jerome's crazy. What on earth is he thinking of? It's an insult, if it isn't the letter of a lunatic. You and I, I suppose, are not fit to bring up a little Bonaparte. He must be brought up at this make-believe court of what-do-ye-call-it? I never in all my life . . ."

He paced up and down the room, spluttering and

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fuming and tossing his coat-tails. Mrs. Patterson sat very quietly, knowing that a word from her would probably cause an explosion either from Elizabeth or from Mr. Patterson.

"I refuse to meet the fellow. One Le Camus is quite enough." He banged his fist into his palm. "It's an insult! An insult, that's what it is! "

"It's hardly an insult," said Elizabeth, holding the letter, "whatever else it may be. They wish my child to be given the upbringing and the education suitable to his rank, and most likely to fit him for the future. It is certainly not an insult. And it's opened my eyes," she added, "to a number of things."

"It's opened mine to one or two," said Mr. Patterson, with a toss of his coat-tails. "Is there no limit to the arrogance of these people? "

"None whatever," replied his daughter. "Who could imagine there was? But there is more in this than appears on the surface. Much more."

Mr. Patterson stopped his pacing and stood in front of her, looking at her sharply from under his frowning eyebrows. His appearance was rather that of an old sailor than a merchant, as he stood there, legs apart, in his blue coat and white piqué trousers.

"More, is there? " he said, gruffly. "Well, there's enough, in all conscience, that's as plain as plain. You, his mother, aren't fine enough to have the bringing up of a member of the precious Bonaparte family. That's what the letter as good as says. Gad! It's enough to make a man's blood boil! "

"What is important to me in that letter," said Elizabeth, quietly, "is that they *do* look upon Bo as a member of the family."

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"And why shouldn't they? He was born into it, wasn't he? Hey?"

"Let Betsy explain, William," Mrs. Patterson said.

"Am I stopping her?"

"As the marriage was pronounced null and void," Elizabeth said, "they might have regarded him as illegitimate. I say they might have. Well, obviously they do not." She tapped the letter. "They regard him as a Bonaparte, and wish to bring him up as one. And if that is so, then it must mean that they look upon him as a possible heir to the throne of France." She and the old man looked hard at one another; then she went on: "That, I presume, is why they want him. Otherwise, why should they trouble themselves about him? I say 'they', because clearly Jerome wouldn't have written this letter without the knowledge and consent of the Queen, as well as of Napoleon. You'd think that Bo's presence in Westphalia might be an embarrassment to her. Nevertheless, she has agreed to it. Well, then, there's a good reason for wanting him there. I don't for a moment think that Jerome has suddenly felt the stirrings of paternal feeling. He wants Bo because Bo is important to the family. And also, possibly, they have little hope of children themselves. Catherine may be barren, for all we know."

Mrs. Patterson winced a little. Her daughter was sometimes unnecessarily outspoken.

"Oh, you think that's what they're up to, do you?" her father said. "And what, may I inquire, do you mean to do about it? Hand him over?"

Elizabeth smiled, briefly.

"Nothing on earth would induce me to part with

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him; least of all to Jerome. No, I have quite other plans for him."

"Glad to hear it," said Mr. Patterson, heartily. He was intensely relieved. For a moment he had believed that, with her longing for Europe, she might have felt a willingness to let Bo go there as she could not. "And I hope," he continued, "that your plans include sending Bo to a good school here and giving him a sane, decent, American education."

"There's time," she said, "to discuss all that later. We must reply, now, to M. Le Camus. What I would like you to say is simply that I refuse, under any consideration whatever, to part with my son."

"Good!" cried Mr. Patterson. "Do you hear that, my dear?"

Mrs. Patterson nodded and smiled.

"I never expected Betsy to say anything different," she said.

"Well, now for the letter." He began his pacing again. "How shall I put it? 'Sir.' I'll be hanged if I'll 'Majesty' him. 'Sir; In reply to your letter of May 16th, my daughter, Elizabeth, wishes me to say that she will on no account be parted from her son, whom she proposes to bring up in America, as an American citizen.'"

"No, no!" she said. "You needn't add that; it's extremely unlikely that I shall do anything of the sort."

Mr. Patterson paused in front of her.

"What? Why not? What do you mean? Hey?"

"I don't wish him brought up as an American. He is a Frenchman."

"Betsy, I vow you are the most——"

"Oh, William, William," cried Mrs. Patterson.

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"Not now, dear, not now! The letter must be written."

"We won't quarrel about the future, father," said Elizabeth. "All you need say is that I refuse, unconditionally. Say it as you please, but let me see a draft of the letter."

Mr. Patterson sat down abruptly at the writing-table, took up some papers and a long quill pen, and spread his elbows wide. It was an indignant back that they saw, bent over the task. Then, as his pen began to scratch, Elizabeth looked down at the letter which lay open on her knees. The writing was quite unchanged. Only the signature was new to her: "Jerome Napoleon", with some complicated flourishes. She could easily imagine him sitting practising it, in his palace at Napoleonshöhe. She felt a sudden, unexpected wave of emotion that sent the colour into her face. There was something between them still; an emotional link, a tie that only the passing years would wholly break. She guessed that he had felt it too—though it must be growing weaker now—when he wrote the words, "*Dans ma position et celle d'Élise. . .*" Something still vibrated faintly, like the shuddering of a wounded bird before death releases it. And then her old contempt for him returned, and overwhelmed her. Playing at being a king! What a silly farce! He could never be one, however well he might dress the part. So he would leave her with nothing, nothing at all? He would take even her son from her if he could! He had robbed her of name, fame, husband, career, hope, faith, love; and now he had stretched out a hand towards her boy. Might not Le Camus, perhaps, when he knew his mission had failed, attempt to kidnap the child? Such things had been done. He had already guessed,

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perhaps, that the errand would fail. Alarmed at the thought, she sprang up and hurried out of the room, her mother's eyes following her. In a sudden panic she went calling through the house for him. Margaret heard her and came out upon an upper landing, a slim, pretty girl, less meek than she looked.

"He's out in the garden, with Aunt Caroline. What on earth do you want him for, in such a hurry?"

Elizabeth did not reply, but ran out of doors, and saw the old black nurse—the little English nurse had gone back to England—gently swinging Bo in a small swing his uncles had made for him.

"Aunt Caroline," she said, panting a little, "Bo is not to be left alone. And he is not to be taken out into the streets without me. There is someone here in Baltimore, a bad man, who *might* try to steal him and take him to Europe. So we must keep a close watch. And tell the other servants, too."

Aunt Caroline snatched the boy up in her arms.

"Fo' de Lawd's sake! Dey sure is some mighty wicked folks in dis yere world. Aunt Car'line ain't goin' to let no harm come to dis lil treasure, no ma'am! "

The letter was written to Elizabeth's satisfaction, and sent to the hotel where Le Camus was staying, with a covering letter to the envoy himself stating that further communications between him and the Patterson family were useless. The French frigate that had brought him was not due to return again for two weeks, so Le Camus, they presently heard, went to New York meanwhile, and only returned in time to go aboard. Elizabeth was greatly relieved when she was told that he had sailed.

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"Though I don't think we've heard the last of this," she said.

She proved to be right. About Christmas-time another letter came from Jerome, addressed, this time, to herself. It arrived just before the fifth anniversary of their marriage. (Bo was now a lively child of three and a half.) Elizabeth expected to find reproaches in it—perhaps orders. She found chiefly disappointment and some renewed offers, these of an astonishing nature.

"My dear Elisa," was the opening he had chosen. He had been bitterly disappointed, he told her, at her refusal, brought back to him by Le Camus, to be parted from her son; especially as she was thus depriving him of the incalculable advantages of the kind of upbringing that would have been his in Westphalia.

Nevertheless, he understood her reasons, and sympathized with them. She could not, it was plain, endure the prospect of separation from her child. The feelings of a mother were stronger than all others, and he had not, perhaps, fully taken this into account. But he still longed to see his son, and in order that this longing might be fulfilled without pain to her, he was now writing to offer her the Principality of Smalkalden (a tiny corner of Westphalia), with the title of Princess for herself, and Prince for her son. Here she might live with her boy, subject to but one condition; that he and his son should see each other once a month. Smalkalden was thirty leagues from Cassel, and separated from it by a Saxon province; she might, therefore, live there in complete independence, and in the manner that became her title and position.

If, on the other hand, she should not feel inclined to accept this offer, he was willing to allow her two

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hundred thousand francs a year if she would take up her abode, with their son, in some other convenient part of Europe.

The letter was formal, business-like, and to the point. Certainly, both offers were, in their way, highly generous. She pondered every word, she examined the proposals from every possible angle, and then showed the letter to her friend, Mrs. Caton. But her mind was already made up.

Mrs. Caton thought she ought to accept.

"He has made the best offers it is in his power to make," she said.

"They're too good," Elizabeth said. "I don't trust them."

"I don't quite know what you mean," said Mrs. Caton. "Here it all is, in black and white."

"I don't trust Jerome. How do I know that he can pay me such a sum? I hear that the finances of Westphalia are in a deplorable state. And what is Smalkalden? Probably a poor, quite obscure little place, where I would be buried alive. No, no. Neither of these offers attracts me in the least. I doubt very much if they were even made with Napoleon's knowledge. I suspect he would think they were ridiculous. It's all a part of Jerome's love of splendour; you see, he likes to think of himself as lavish, kingly. He'd get me out there, and then I'd never see a penny of the two hundred thousand, and no one would ever hear of me again. I'd far rather trust to Napoleon than to Jerome. I'd rather be sheltered under the wing of an eagle than suspended from the bill of a goose."

Mrs. Caton laughed heartily at this, and repeated it to all her acquaintances. She thought it magnificent

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of her young friend to turn down such splendid offers, but she suspected that she was right, and did not try to dissuade her. Elizabeth next wrote to Madame Tussard, another eager partisan and spreader of news, so that it was not long before it was known in Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia and New York that Madame Bonaparte might, if she chose, be made a Princess, and Bo a Prince.

But Elizabeth herself was not at all impressed. It was a sham, a pretence. There was probably a wretched, broken-down palace of sorts in Smalkalden, where she would be expected to live, and which it would cost her a fortune to make habitable. And if Westphalian finances were as shaky as Henrietta Rewbell said they were—and she believed her—how could Jerome afford to pay her such a sum? Could she rely on him? She was certain she could not. She had been sacrificed once to political needs, and after the most solemn of vows; how could she be sure she would not be sacrificed again?

“No, no. Once is enough. And what sort of education would Bo have in Smalkalden? As for settling down elsewhere in Europe, I may do that in any case, if peace ever comes. But I would be much wiser to content myself with Napoleon’s sixty thousand francs, which I am certain of, than have to whistle for Jerome’s two hundred thousand.”

But some unworthy little demon in her caused her to answer the letter not with an unequivocal refusal, but in a bargaining spirit. She wanted to show Jerome that she was viewing the matter purely from a business-like standpoint; without emotion, without rancour, and most decidedly without any feelings of gratitude. Also, she could not resist the desire to bait him a little, to

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play the captious woman, to draw him on, to find out more about the situation, to be exigent and to be imperious.

First of all, she declined the offer of the principality of Smalkalden. "Westphalia," she wrote, "is a large country, but it is not large enough to hold two queens." That done, she turned to the other offer. Where would he expect her to live? She knew that France was closed to her, and that he would not hear of her living in England. Might she live in Switzerland, perhaps, or Rome, or Florence? And how would the money be paid to her; and what would her position be, and would she be allowed to retain the name of Bonaparte? Intending, all along, to refuse whatever renewed or improved offers he made her, she enjoyed her malicious bargaining. It would have been more dignified to have sent a polite and formal refusal, or to have said nothing at all, but she was tempted, and could not resist. Would he show the letter to Catherine? She supposed that he would, and wrote it with one eye upon her. In short, she enjoyed herself, and even hinted that it was not beyond the bounds of possibility that she might marry an Englishman, which would, of course, make it impossible for her to accept any offers whatever from Jerome, no matter how favourable.

When the letter was sent—she did not show it to her parents—she felt a little ashamed. She had descended to Jerome's level. Well, she thought, defying the critic in herself, why not, for once? It was the best way of dealing with him.

Oddly enough, she confided only in one person, and that person, James Randolph—the son of the family she and her mother had visited in Virginia during their

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exile. He had been very much in love with her at the time of Jerome's appearance on the scene, and had not yet cured himself of loving her. She saw more of him than of any other man except Mr. Gilmor. She did not love him in the least. She thought him superior to the other young men (he was little older than herself) in and about Baltimore, for he came of an excellent family, was well off, owned lands and houses in Virginia, and knew how to conduct himself. Nevertheless, she never for a moment contemplated marrying him. But it pleased her, in a slightly sadistic way, to show him the worst side of her nature, and he was suitably angry when she told him what she had written to Jerome. He was a lawyer and liked people—women especially—to show a proper caution when committing themselves to paper. He said what he thought of the letter and of her; she answered angrily, and they quarrelled. For some time he stayed away, and avoided her when they met in public, then one afternoon he came to the house in South Street unexpectedly, and found Elizabeth resting and reading on the big mahogany sofa in the drawing-room, and her mother rocking and doing needlework beside her.

It was immediately obvious to both ladies that he had been drinking, but they were not unduly shocked or surprised. Young men frequently took too much to drink; they were judged by their behaviour when in that state, and James Randolph, drunk or sober, was capable of behaving like a gentleman. Indeed, Mrs. Patterson's first act was to ring and order some rum punch to be made and some cakes to be brought. Then she excused herself, on the score of having to take Octavius to see the doctor, and left the two alone.

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James, about to sit on the sofa beside Elizabeth, glanced up as he did so at the portrait of Mr. Patterson.

"How is the old boy? Do you quarrel with him as much as ever? I wonder he puts up with such a vixen in the house. A man of great forbearance, and some day you'll appreciate him as he deserves."

"Or he me," she said, dryly.

"We all appreciate you, goddess, as far as we are able."

"James, why do you sit here, so close to me? You've been drinking."

"I expect that is why," he said. "It's given me a little Dutch courage."

"I'm glad to hear that I frighten you. I would far rather you were afraid of me than in love with me."

"A man can be both, goddess, a man can be both."

She looked at him, coldly. He had a handsome, dark, distinguished face, a good, decided nose, and hair that was inclined to fall forward over his forehead. At the moment it was unusually untidy. He had a reputation for gallantry second to none, and she knew that plenty of women had loved him, and loved him now. Certainly he had charm, even when half drunk. In fact, particularly when half drunk, though she would have found it difficult to say why. It gave him, perhaps, a slightly absurd and exaggerated air of self-confidence, and he carried himself with a little extra dignity and pride. He was handsome, likeable, attractive, well-to-do, in every way an eligible man. Why, then, could she feel nothing more for him than tolerance and an affection born of their long friendship and familiarity? And she said to herself, "Because I am not the sort of woman who can stoop to an inferior." And then was startled

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at the thought that she could look upon James Randolph as her inferior. Why? How could he be? "Because I am a Bonaparte. And because I have ambitions, and he has none. Because I would never be content with the aimless life he leads. He only plays at being a lawyer, he's not serious about it; what he really cares for are horses and dogs and hunting and being a sort of country squire, and he is quite content with it all. That is why I look on him as my inferior."

He slipped an arm behind her.

"Ain't you sick of this life, Betsy? When are you going to give up hoping to be Jerome's Queen? Isn't his wife a great healthy German girl, likely to live another sixty years?"

"Take your arm away, James. I'm not in the mood for a flirtation. And you know very well that nothing on earth would induce me to go back to Jerome as his wife."

"I know very well? I know nothing of the sort. You'd go like a shot. You're a beautiful woman, Betsy, and you're wasting yourself. I'm just drunk enough to tell you the truth. You're scarcely flesh and blood nowadays. You're getting to be like a piece of brittle china, an ornament for the mantelpiece. No blood, no emotions. You ought to marry, and you ought to marry me. I'll make a human being of you."

"Thank you, I'm quite human enough. And I know you far too well to think of marrying you."

"You know me too well? Don't flatter yourself, Betsy. You don't know me at all. You didn't even know for instance——"

Very swiftly he caught her in both arms, crushed

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her against him and kissed her, paying not the slightest attention to her struggles, or to her furiously lowered voice, ordering him to stop at once.

"—that I was going to kiss you. Did you? Well, I've done it. I haven't kissed you since you were sixteen."

"James, how dare you behave like this? You're drunk. Let me go. The servants——"

He kissed her again.

"I know how long it takes to make a rum punch."

She slipped out of his arms, angry but self-controlled. She wiped her lips carefully with her handkerchief, and he watched her, lolling back on the sofa and smiling.

"The pleasure," she said, "was entirely yours. I never enjoyed anything less."

"So much the worse for you," he retorted. "You'll be getting past the age for kissing soon. It's a kindness I've done you."

"You'd better go home," she said. "And if you really want to marry, find some nice girl who'll look up to you and admire you. I could never live with you. I know far too well what life with you would be like."

"And what would it be like? "

"I should be a sort of wife-housekeeper, expected to look after the servants and run your houses. And in return I would have to hear you and your friends talk perpetually about horses, dogs, slaves, fishing and hunting. You never read. You don't know the first thing about music or art. You're all alike, you and your friends, as alike as peas. Some of you drink less than others. But you all think the same. No thank you, James. We're old friends, and I'm fond of you, and

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I hope we shall always be friends—though you must promise to behave better than you've behaved to-day."

"Friends?" he said. "My friends aren't women. They're men. I'll have women friends, perhaps, when I'm sixty, not before."

She smiled her brief little smile.

"How characteristic! So wholly American."

"Don't think it. It's the man's point of view."

"It's nothing of the sort. In Europe men and women understand what friendship can mean, because they know how to talk to one another; they can meet in society day after day, year after year, and still have thoughts to exchange, ideas to discuss. There's some grace and courtesy in the relationship there; there's none in this barbaric country."

"What a little pretender you are, Betsy! All play-acting and sham and ceremony and show. If you were a real woman, I'd take you under my arm now and spank you for talking nonsense."

For some time they bickered, not unamicably. He was in a quarrelsome mood, but she kept her temper. She did not, in fact, feel genuinely angry, only sarcastic, and half amused.

When the punch was brought in, he drank it liberally.

"If you're riding home," she said, "heaven help you."

"Heaven will, and does. Don't worry about me. It's you heaven will have to help."

"We'd quarrel like cat and dog if we married," she said. "You prate about chivalry, you Americans, but you don't know the meaning of it."

"You Americans?" He laughed. "What are you? A Portugee?"

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"I am half Irish, and I am married to a Frenchman."

"Still married to him? Lord, Betsy, there's no hope for you." He fetched his broad planter's hat and clapped it on his head. "A good woman wasted, a good woman spoiled. It's a pity. It's a great pity. Well, it's not likely that you'll see me again. Unless," he added, "I'm even drunker than I was to-day."

"In which case, you needn't trouble to come."

"This may be good-bye, then."

"I shan't cry my eyes out, James, if you wish it to be so."

"You ought to."

He ran down the front steps, flung himself on his horse, and went clattering down the street, scattering a little group of white and coloured urchins who were playing hopscotch in the middle of it.

She did not see him again for nearly a year.

And then the news came of the divorce of Napoleon and Josephine. All Baltimore, all America, talked of little else.

It affected Elizabeth in an unexpected way. Her heart went out, not to Josephine, but to Napoleon, in passionate admiration. There was a man! He would sacrifice even his nearest and dearest to high and great necessities. How well she understood, now, his treatment of herself. All animosity—and she had felt little towards him—now died in her. It was kept for Jerome, the feeble brother. What Napoleon did he did boldly, with a gesture historic and magnificent. This act of his vindicated herself, robbed her own defeat of half its humiliation, half its pain. "What I have suffered, the Empress is now suffering. She and I are sisters in experience and in sorrow. What the people of Balti-

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more have thought and said about me, they must now say and think of the most exalted woman in Europe. I can hold up my head again."

"That's the wickedest act," Mr. Patterson said, "a man ever committed. It strikes at everything that's sacred. He'll be punished for it, you'll see. That was a fine woman and a good wife, and he'll have to suffer for what he's done."

"He is only treating her as he treated me," Elizabeth pointed out.

"I never exactly admired him for what he did to you," said her father, grimly.

She went to Washington very frequently now, the guest, very often, of gay, pretty Mrs. Madison at the White House. She met diplomats, foreign ministers, senators, everyone who, in her eyes, was worth meeting in America. She became very friendly with the Gallatin family, and especially with Albert Gallatin himself, whom she greatly admired and respected. Among these people she felt herself to be in a larger world, and her hunger to be in the midst of great affairs, and to be in touch with the happenings of the day, was partially appeased. The diplomats believed that Napoleon's star was waning. Could it be true? She found it hard to credit.

But it was true that things were not going well with France, and she was torn between two loyalties. She greatly admired the English, and in a struggle between two such giants as England and Napoleon, she hardly knew which one she could least bear to see overthrown. She longed for peace and Europe, but if the Emperor were defeated, what would become of the Bonapartes? And what, then, would become of her dreams for Bo?

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She hardly troubled herself to consider what would become of the kingdom of Westphalia and Jerome. Had either of them any real existence except in the reflected light of that great candle? Blow it out, and would they not instantly vanish into the dark?

She asked herself these questions as the Napoleonic polonaise was played in an increasingly sombre key. If the Emperor should fall—it might just be possible—if he should fall, what would become, then, of all the wealth, all the power, all the glory?

Might not Jerome, that shadow king, brought low by his brother's misfortunes, turn, conceivably, to her? Might he not consider that he had a claim upon her? She had to think of herself and of Bo and the little fortune she was so painstakingly and competently storing up against the future. Might Jerome not stretch out a hand again? Against such an eventuality there was only one safeguard; divorce. And her father heartily, even enthusiastically, approved when she showed a willingness to consider it.

It was a worrying, trying time, with Great Britain enforcing her blockade against France, and pressing American sailors into British ships to fight against the French. The whole of America was angry and indignant about it, and Commodore Barney, that born privateer and adventurer, was aching to be up and doing, as were half the men in Baltimore. How long, how long would President Madison patiently endure such treatment from a supposedly friendly country?

And just as Elizabeth, with a watchful eye on Europe, had made up her mind to lay her plea for a divorce before the courts of Maryland, the war of 1812 was ushered in.



CHAPTER X

CATHERINE was not Elizabeth, but she was the path to kingship and to glory. And Elizabeth, if Jerome had chosen to remain with her, might have been the path to obscurity and exile. It was charming to visit America, and to be fêted and entertained there; it would have been another matter to live there as an American citizen; as a virtuous and domesticated husband and father. .

One cannot have everything in this life. And even if Catherine was not Elizabeth there was much that she emphatically was. She was a young woman of tact, good feeling, and almost sublime good nature. She was spirited, gay, simple, as children are simple, and inordinately trustful. This last was, perhaps, the quality that most endeared her to Jerome. She never questioned him. True, she was dreadfully jealous, for an hour or so, at a ball at Fontainebleau when he danced again and again, and yet again, with lovely Stephanie de Beauharnais, Josephine's niece, and an expert charmer. But she was not feeling very well that night, all the excitement had told upon her, and she caught a glimpse, watching those two, of how Jerome might look at a woman with whom he was wildly in love. The room was hot, with its hundreds of candles, and airless, and her corsets were cruelly tight. She fainted—oh, the shame of it!—and Napoleon, guessing the reason easily enough, for he was not indifferent to Stephanie himself, gave Jerome a furious talking to. But that was

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all over now; champagne, as Jerome assured her, had been the cause of it, and they were going to be happy for ever after.

"We must choose your ladies-in-waiting," he said to her before they left Paris. "There is a certain person in Genoa named La Flèche who rendered me many services. He would gladly come to me in Westphalia, and I think his wife, Blanche, would suit you excellently. She is pretty, gay, amusing, and altogether charming. I met them both while I was with the fleet there, and have many reasons to feel grateful to them."

"Of course, of course!" cried Catherine. "You have only to speak of them. Anyone who was kind to you at that time must have my gratitude. Send for them, please."

"Let us only have young and amusing people at Court," said Jerome, gratified by her spontaneous wish to please him. "I like to see attractive young women about me, however much I may be in love with the Queen my wife."

And he playfully hung about her neck a necklace he had bought that morning in the Rue de Rivoli, and kissed her, and she flung her arms about him in delight and pleasure, and hugged him against her full, firm breast.

"So good you are! So much I love you!"

She was sturdy, his Catherine, heavier than he—he was very lightly built—and almost as strong. But she was not stolid, physically or mentally. She moved quickly, danced lightly, was animated, and loved to laugh. Treated far from well by her bullying, brutal father, King Frederick, and scarcely better by her loutish and selfish brother, she had rarely known kind-

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ness, and whatever his faults and weaknesses, Jerome had a soft heart. Her mother had died mysteriously and tragically at twenty-four, in childbirth, away from her home and from the husband who hated her. That episode was never mentioned, and it had shadowed her early youth. What had happened; why, and by what means? She had no idea. It was all dark, all secret.

With her English stepmother she contrived to keep on excellent terms. Life was so much easier if one just made up one's mind to get on with people and accept their faults as one hoped they would accept one's own. And, above all, to smile!

The grandeur of the match she was forced to make—"It is necessary," King Frederick had told her, "to the very existence of our kingdom"—at first appalled her. She had not foreseen—how could she?—the brilliance and sophistication of the Napoleonic setting, and the ordeal of the wedding was tremendous. But she came through it remarkably well, and with the respect of all, falling in love with her young husband in the most natural and accommodating way.

Madame Mère at once recognized in her a kindred spirit.

"I love you," she said, after the wedding, "the best of all my daughters-in-law."

"And I shall love you," cried Catherine, "as I would have loved my own mother if I had known her."

But the honeymoon was expensive, and the preparations for life in Westphalia costly. During the four months that elapsed between the wedding and the departure for Stuttgart, Jerome had contrived to spend three million francs, which he did not possess, and he saw no way of paying his debts. Unable to leave Paris

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until something was done, he wrote to Napoleon, who replied with a sharp and admonitory letter, ending, however, by authorizing him to borrow one million, eight hundred thousand francs from the Sinking Fund, and to draw, in advance, upon his allowance as a Prince of France. By this means, his debts in Paris were paid off, and he was enabled to depart for Westphalia, via the Court of Stuttgart, temporarily solvent.

At Stuttgart they were warmly welcomed by King Frederick, who could be benign when it suited him, and correctly but less warmly greeted by his English wife, a lady of many sorrows and humiliations, who was sustained, in her uncomfortable rôle as Queen of Würtemberg, chiefly by her pride of birth. But she was a misfit wherever she turned. Too German to be happy among the English, she was also too English to be happy among the Würtembergians. Life was not kind.

"We must get on, we must get on to Cassel," said Jerome, who had soon had enough of Stuttgart and his wife's relations. He was anxious to put an end to the Regency that Napoleon had temporarily set up in Westphalia, and to see something of his new kingdom.

"When you please, my darling."

"Then come along, come along! One would think you were happy here. It is everything a court ought not to be."

"But I am quite ready, dearest. I will go as soon as you like."

Indeed her only pleasure while there was to see again some old servants and two of her governesses, of whom she was very fond.

Rewbell, in company with Morio, another member

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of Jerome's suite, had gone on ahead and had written frequent letters, praising the country and the enthusiasm and loyalty of its inhabitants. In fact, from his accounts, it seemed that one thing and one only was lacking. Westphalia was shockingly poor and already deeply in debt to France. Napoleon, as Henrietta Rewbell had guessed, needed money from it for his armies, and Jerome was expected to perform the miracle of raising it.

Nevertheless, as they drove through their new domain in a carriage drawn by six white horses, with outriders dressed in scarlet, and with a long train of carriages containing their suite and their luggage following behind, they were full of delight and pleased expectation. Both young, both as eager as children for pleasure and amusement, both—for Catherine was determined to model herself upon her husband in all things—optimistic, easy-going and irresponsible, they thought of these lands and forests and farms and towns and churches and schools, and all the anxious human hearts among them, as parts of a huge and complicated toy. Their one regret was that they were not seeing it for the first time in the summer.

"Oh, see, oh, see, Jerome, how pretty is that hill with a church upon its top resting!"

"That is mine," he would say with mock gravity. "It belongs to me."

"No, mine! No, mine! First I saw it!"

"For one kiss, then. There. It is yours."

On the surface, everything was smiling enough, and in the towns there was a show of real fervour, with flags, archways decorated with pine-boughs, music and speeches to welcome them. The country-side was pleas-

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ing, under its light covering of snow, and the villages and farms—all toys—not without charm. Catherine never doubted the sincerity of the cheers and speeches, and said many times in her bad French:

"We shall be happy here. So pretty a kingdom it is. What have I done to deserve so much good fortune?"

Sometimes they were mired by bad roads, and it took hours to get out of the ruts. ("I will have good roads made," said Jerome. "It is one of the first things Napoleon always does.") But their spirits were equal to it, though sometimes those of their suite were not. They approached Napoleonshöhe one day, early in December, at dusk, and were somewhat dismayed at the huge pile that confronted them, dark against the yellow evening sky.

Rewbell and Morio were there to greet them, together with a large staff of retainers. Fires had been built everywhere, but the coldness of the rooms was deplorable. Jerome stamped his numbed feet and thought of the warm, stove-heated houses of America, and remembered a house he had visited in New York with Elizabeth that had hot pipes running under the floors. A good idea. He would heat the whole palace in that way. To be cold was to be miserable—and to be unkingly. He would see to it at once.

He and Catherine rushed from room to room. "Here is the throne-room. There you and I will sit. It is not so bad."

"But it is immense!" cried Catherine.

"A throne-room should be. We will hang it with tapestries from end to end."

They went up the great staircase.

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"This will be the royal suite. Here is your bedroom, and there is mine. I will have the walls covered in red brocade. I must have a room, a good room, for Alexandre Le Camus, close to mine. Alexandre likes everything very comfortable. *Mon Dieu!* there is much to do here."

"But so big a palace I never expected," said Catherine. "It is much too big for two little people."

"You think so? Wait a month or so, and you will wonder where everyone is to sleep. I intend to be well served, and to have as many people as I wish in my suite. We will buy pictures, furniture, rugs, hangings, everything we need."

That would be easy enough. They could send to Paris for all that they required. Jerome had only to wave his hand and the thing would be done. Meanwhile, there was furniture enough to make the place habitable, and it was great fun to be taking over the summer palace of the Electors of Hesse. Jerome, with his gay green uniform, gold lace and gold sword, Catherine in her bright blue taffeta dress and smart, Parisian hat, laughing, joking, hurrying eagerly from room to room, seemed to promise happier, gayer times than the Electors had ever known; they brought with them an air of prosperity, of life and warmth and youth.

In the morning it was thrilling beyond words to get up and look through the curtains at their new domain, which had a sweep, a scope, a grand extent that they had not imagined. The view was a lovely one, and the eye looked far away past formal gardens, fountains, ornamental water, all flanked by wooded slopes, with here and there a temple, to a distant hill on which

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stood a huge bronze statue of the Farnese Hercules, and an octagon-shaped building called, they later learnt, the Reissenschloss. So high was it perched that they could guess what a view it commanded, certainly of the river Fulda, that same pretty river that wound through Cassel. Catherine, who was an early riser, observed all this for a while alone and in silence, but at last her excitement proved too much for her, and she could not resist running into Jerome's room and waking him and making him get up and look at it with her.

She could hardly wait, she said, to roam over the park, and climb the hill, and explore all the winding paths.

"Oh!" she cried, "how I wish it were summer! How I wish it were summer!"

But there were duties to be performed. Towards noon, dressed in their best, they made a splendid entry into Cassel in the same *calèche* in which they had arrived, and with the same white horses and scarlet-clad outriders, and the quiet, drowsy little town roused itself to welcome its new sovereigns. "What cannot be helped must be endured," said the people to one another; "perhaps, at least, we shall have a few years of peace"; and Catherine, whose taste in jokes was more German than French, laughed delightedly when she saw over the door of a baker's shop, an inscription which read: "Whosoever is not prepared to love King Jerome will be thrown by me into the dough."

Even royal duties, if taken lightly enough, can be made amusing, and to Jerome and Catherine it was all a delightful game, requiring plenty of gorgeous

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dressing, and pomp and display. At their "town residence", the Bellevue-Schloss, Jerome, adding a splendid velvet mantle to his uniform, and looking more than ever a little Napoleon, received the important personages of the town, a quaint group, most of them stout and elderly, and some comic enough, so that it was difficult, at times, not to wink at Catherine, or at one of the ladies of the Court. Guns were fired, people cheered, a little thinly, outside the windows—"they must learn more enthusiasm," thought Jerome—and that night there were fireworks, and all the cafés and public buildings were gaily illuminated.

And Catherine looked about her at still another vast, half-empty palace needing new carpets, new hangings, more pictures, new furniture. Certainly she and Jerome would have plenty to do.

But all too soon, Jerome was writing letters to Napoleon, placing before him the unfortunate and discouraging state of Westphalian finances. After ordering that the funds in the State Treasury should be held at his disposal from December 1st, he was startled to find that Daru, Napoleon's Intendant General in Berlin, had power to refuse this request, and promptly did refuse it. Daru's duty, first and foremost, was the maintenance of the French Grand Army, and Westphalia still owed France well over thirty-six million francs towards its upkeep. For even victories cost money, and money had to be found. Napoleon was in Italy, and pending his return, Daru would not permit the new king to touch a penny of the revenues of his new kingdom. Jerome wrote indignantly to Napoleon, who merely backed up Daru, in whom he had great faith. So he wrote to him once again; the sort of letter he well

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knew, from past experience, how to write, and was to write even more frequently in the future.

"Your Majesty knows," he pointed out, "that on my departure I was without money, and that I left in the assurance of finding resources here to repay your Majesty the sum advanced to me and provide for my equipment here."

Vain hope. The outlook indeed was black, blacker than Jerome could have believed possible. There was no fund whatever upon which he could draw, and the situation was so desperate as to render quite useless any small economies—or so he considered, as many before him have done—while large economies were out of the question.

"One must live like a king if one is a king," said Jerome, when Catherine wondered if they ought to have ortolans stuffed with oysters for dinner, if they ought to give quite so many and such large banquets, and to drink so much expensive wine. "We may as well go on increasing the debts. A million francs or so will make little difference. Westphalia will have to raise a loan, and it might as well be a large one. When one's debts are on such a scale, it is best to be liberal, because liberality gives confidence. If we so soon begin cutting down expenses, we will be considered mean; or else people will suspect that the country is bankrupt."

"I do not understand these things as you do, my life," said Catherine, placidly, and put it out of her mind.

"I wish to reward Alexandre Le Camus for all his devotion to me," Jerome said one day. "Really, I don't know what I should do without him. I want to give him a title and a suitable income. There are no longer any Counts of Fürstenstein, I find, and it seems

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a pity to let such an old title die out. I propose to make him Count Fürstenstein, and to give him an income of forty thousand francs a year."

"No one," cried Catherine, "is more loyal to his friends. Much I admire such loyalty! M. Le Camus, I am sure, will be greatly pleased."

Everyone was pleased, except certain other members of the suite, who thought they too should be so honoured—and were, all in good time—and Napoleon, who heard of it from Jerome himself, and wrote a furious letter, pointing out that Le Camus had not performed a single service other than personal services to Jerome, for which he had been amply paid.

"There are more than ten men," he wrote, indignantly, "who have saved my life, to whom I give only a pension of six hundred francs. I have marshals who have won ten battles, who are covered with wounds, and who have received no such recompense as you give to the Sieur Le Camus." He went on to say that Jerome must undo what he had done, or that the Sieur Le Camus must renounce, immediately, his French citizenship.

"I have received your letter of the 24th December," he went on, "concerning your finances. What finances will you have left, if you behave like this? You have eaten up three millions in Paris in two months; you will eat up thirty without rhyme or reason, in even less time."

Le Camus readily decided to renounce his French citizenship. It was agreeable and useful to be a Count. Life in Westphalia was extremely pleasant, and all his family were now settled there. France seemed very far away.

But soon Jerome was much annoyed to find that he

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was being watched, and all his acts reported on. Jollivet, the Finance Minister appointed by Napoleon, had been ordered by his master to perform this additional duty. He was to write to the Emperor all that went on in Napoleonshöhe and in Cassel, so that he should know how far Jerome was fulfilling his promise to make Westphalia a pattern state for all the states of Europe. His news was not reassuring. Barely a month after Jerome began his reign, Jollivet was already writing:

The people of Cassel have grown singularly cold since the arrival of the King. They cry misery, they complain . . . the King receives few signs of respect from them. They rarely salute him in the streets, or when he rides past on his horse . . . he has sunk in public esteem . . . certain gallant adventures have already done him harm. It is publicly known that one of the Queen's ladies has been dismissed because of him.

Publicly known it may have been, but it was certain that Catherine did not know it, any more than she knew that after the dismissal, a home was found for the culprit conveniently near. All Catherine knew was that the young woman had not learnt how to conduct herself at a court, and she was therefore advised to part with her. It was a great pity, for the girl was agreeable enough, and had a pretty face and figure. One was foolish to expect too much of people; it was so easy to like them and to get on with them if one were a little blind to their faults. But there were so many complaints, in this particular case, that she was forced to listen. She liked all the people of her household; her grand-mistress, the proud and lovely Countess Truchess

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Waldburg, her ladies of the palace; the Princess Gilsa, the Baroness Pappenheim (they were mostly German), Madame Morio, Madame du Coudras, Madame de Witzleben, the Princess de Hohenlohe-Kirchberg. As for her five chamberlains, all were agreeable enough; the Barons de Bodenhauser, de Pappenheim, de Bischoffstein, de Schele, de Norvins. De Norvins was a great scribbler and a most amusing person; almost as versatile as Le Camus, who was now busy assembling a theatrical troupe, a sort of Comédie Française, for the amusement of the Court. Then there were her equerries; the Marquis de Maubreuil, a handsome, daring sort of man; she perhaps liked him the least; the Barons de Mesenholm, de Menguersen de Busche, and de Malsbourg. And of course a secretary, M. de Pfeiffer. These were quite separate from Jerome's suite, which was larger, much larger. It was great fun working out with Jerome, assisted by Le Camus, now Count Fürstenstein, and de Norvins, the functions of all these persons. And when it was done, they found they had written a book of one hundred and twenty-one pages, which was then beautifully bound, and called *Étiquette de la Cour Royale de Westphalie*.

There was etiquette in plenty, but that was not to say that there could not be fun and nonsense and games—riotous games sometimes—in plenty too. But all that was, so to speak, after hours. At special functions, on state occasions, not even Versailles itself could have preserved a stricter formality.

"Not one of the ladies of the Court," wrote a spectator, "is ill-looking." Jerome saw to that. And hardly one of them but was, at one time or another, pursued by him.

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Perhaps Elizabeth was right, and it was too much to expect that he would be faithful to a woman he had not chosen. He was fond of Catherine, but he had acquired the habit, now, of falling in love with pretty faces, with playful and vivacious girls. He had, too, a fondness for actresses that was quite in the royal tradition.

With Fürstenstein beside him at the theatre, he would give free rein to his admiration.

"She is lovely, Alexandre. I am already in love with her. Find out for me who she is, who protects her, if she has a protector—find out all about her. If she is as charming as she seems, arrange a rendezvous."

There was a pretty Mademoiselle Hénin from Paris, whom Jerome presently installed in a small house in Cassel, and visited so openly, so frequently, that Napoleon, through the watchful Jollivet, soon heard of it. Fearful that his young brother might be led to commit some graver folly than he had yet fallen into, he sent two secret agents to Cassel, who spirited the actress away one night and brought her back to Paris.

"Where is that pretty Mademoiselle Hénin, Jerome, who acted so charmingly?" asked Catherine. "I wanted her to be invited to the palace for our theatricals next week."

Where indeed? Jerome did not know, but he could guess. Even here in his own kingdom, it seemed, he was not to be permitted to do as he pleased. It was fortunate that he was good-tempered; and, of course, there were still the money difficulties, so that a serious quarrel with Napoleon, even if he had felt inclined for it, was out of the question. In any case, La Hénin was soon replaced.

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The coffers remained empty, the debts increased. At last a M. Jacobson was found who was willing, though at a woefully high rate of interest, to lend two million francs. Things always arranged themselves if one only waited, so why worry overmuch?

And although the combined suites of the King and Queen, quite apart from the servants, numbered eighty persons, somehow, some day, it would all, doubtless, be paid for. Meanwhile the careful surveillance of Jollivet went on, though Jerome was perfectly well aware of it, and did not moderate his habits because of it.

"A quoi bon," he wrote to Napoleon, *"écrire à Paris que j'ai donné un diamant, que j'ai couché avec une belle?"*

And he seemed unmoved, unruffled by Napoleon's criticisms. They left no impression at all.

"Reason decides nothing with you," the Emperor wrote in an angry letter, "and passion everything." But the postscript rendered quite innocuous all his indignant words, for he added, "My friend, I love you, but you are maddeningly young."

And presently he appointed Reinhard to represent France at Cassel, and, lest Jollivet might be painting too black a picture, ordered Reinhard also to report on all that he saw and heard. So now the watchers were doubled, and a stream of letters passed between Cassel and Paris. Reinhard found more flattering things to say of the royal pair. "The Queen, whose charms of soul and mind seem to unfold more graciously in intimate society, tolerates, rather than takes pleasure in, the pomp of large assemblies." All very well, but he had to admit her extravagance, and the debts to France remained unpaid.

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Neither Catherine nor Jerome were able to feel any particular affection for Cassel. They found the people unresponsive to royal displays and the merchants and burghers chiefly concerned for the prosperity of the town. After the first few days they spent there, amidst decorations and rejoicings, its quaintness failed to appeal to them. It had, it was true, a museum, to which Jerome made handsome gifts in the shape of busts—copies of Canova's works—of himself and other members of the family, but the town responded but coolly. It had gardens, laid out by Le Nôtre, where people walked on holidays and on summer evenings, and in the centre of the Friedrichs-Platz was an interesting statue of the Landgrave Frederick II who, in exchange for the sum of two million dollars, had sent twelve thousand Hessians to America to fight for England in the War of Independence. This statue reminded Jerome of the hatred expressed by Mr. Patterson, and indeed by all the Americans he had ever met, of the Hessians. He told Catherine about it, but she was not sufficiently acquainted with American history to attach much significance to it; though anything that concerned Jerome's first marriage interested her.

And in the Marktgasse, at Number Two, lived two curious brothers, keepers of the museum library—and one of them, superintendent of Jerome's private library as well. Their name was Grimm, and they passed a good deal of their time, rumour said, in writing fairy-tales. Catherine once thought of asking Jerome to invite them to Napoleonshöhe to entertain the Court, for she liked fairy-tales, but somehow the right moment never came.

"We must make a tour of our kingdom," said Jerome

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one day, and Catherine, who enjoyed bowing and smiling and tossing small coins to children, and accepting bouquets from young girls, readily agreed. So they went, in much splendour and with most of their suite, to Heiligenstadt, and east to Nordhausen, and thought of going north to Brunswick; but that they missed a certain spontaneity and fervour in the welcomes they received. Something was lacking; moreover, the weather was not very kind. It was not the weather, however, that turned them back. Didn't the people realize, Catherine wondered, a little sadly, how well disposed their sovereigns were towards them? "I'm sure," she said, "no one could wish them well more sincerely than we do."

And on their return to Napoleonshöhe, bad news awaited them. There had been an attempted insurrection in Magdebourg, on the Prussian border (Magdebourg, the eastern stronghold!), and more trouble, the police reported, was brewing elsewhere. Jerome, on looking into the matter and going over the reports, had to admit to himself that the future did not look wholly bright. It might be well to get Catherine out of the way for a time.

"Josephine has written to you more than once," he said one day, "asking you to pay her a visit. Now that she and Napoleon are at Strasbourg, I think it would be a good moment for you to join them. You know Josephine is fond of you, and I think she is really anxious to see you. If you agree, I will send word at once that she is to expect you."

"Without you?" she cried, looking at him with wide, adoring blue eyes. "Oh, no, no, do not send me away from you! So lonely I would be without my treasure."

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No, no, do not let us separate, my dearest."

But he was anxious. A display of military force just now might have an excellent effect. He would put on a military uniform, place himself at the head of his army and prove to the people of Westphalia that he meant to stand no nonsense. He regretted the necessity, for he was not a man of blood, and he liked uniforms only because they were gay and becoming, and he liked all pageantry. But if the reports of the police were accurate, and he believed they were, something would have to be done.

So in the end, Catherine agreed to go, and he breathed more freely. He could lie to her and deceive her, he could be physically unfaithful to her whenever opportunity offered, and yet he was really attached to her in his own light and superficial way, and had her good and well-being truly at heart. He knew that he could face this trouble better if she were safely in France, with Josephine, and so he packed her off, with half a dozen of her suite, and their parting caused some of the Court ladies to turn away their faces to hide their smiles. Really, Jerome was a splendid actor! But he was sincere enough when he called out, as the whips cracked, "Take good care of yourself, my little wife. *Garde-toi bien!* Write to me every day."

He valued her for her love of him, and for her hearty and sincere admiration; he was grateful to her for her blindness, her innocence, her stupidity where he was concerned, her unquestioning approval of all that he was and did. He respected her because she was his queen, and the Queen of Westphalia. And he felt that a show of concern and affection would be pleasing to Napoleon, who, when he made matches, liked to see

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them succeed—a thing they all too rarely did.

So off Catherine went, in tears, and Jerome busied himself in finding out how far the rot had gone and marching here and there about the country. It had gone far enough. A Baron von Dörnberg was the leader of the revolt, and a determined one, and before many days had passed there were insurgents at the gates of Cassel. These, swelled by deserters from Jérôme's own army, made a fairly formidable body of men. But the town, accustomed to fighting, remained calm, and Jerome's best soldier, General Eblé, put down the rising, not without considerable bloodshed.

And Napoleon wrote:

Your kingdom is without police, finances or organization. . . . What has occurred is no more than I expected. I hope it will teach you a lesson. . . . Make severe examples. [Advice which Jerome was most reluctant to follow.]

But more trouble was still to come, instigated, this time, in Prussia, though the government disclaimed responsibility. And no sooner had this uprising been dealt with than a still greater danger loomed, and Jerome found that his services were needed by his brother against the Austrians, who were about to make an attempt on Dresden.

And now the young King was to prove to Napoleon, and to the world, plainly and unmistakably, that he was no soldier. He was slow in his movements, uncertain, one would almost have said reluctant. The Austrians took Dresden before he contrived to reach it, though he had had time enough to forestall them. It was true that he had under him an army that had little

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reason to be loyal, but he handled it badly and would go nowhere without the whole of his equipage. Count Fürstenstein, lately married to a lady of distinguished German birth, accompanied him as usual, and this light-hearted pair quite failed to realize the sternness of the warfare they were called upon to wage. Thanks, however, to the energy of one of his generals, who acted entirely upon his own initiative and without orders, Dresden was retaken, and Jerome entered it triumphantly.

"Now let us celebrate our victory," he cried to Fürstenstein. "Order a performance at the Opera. Let us hear *Così Fan Tutte*. We are in the city of music." And he did not omit to attend divine service at the Cathedral the next day. But the Austrians were differently employed, and at the end of three days Napoleon was astounded to hear that Jerome had had to evacuate Dresden and fall back on Weimar, with the result that a better soldier was sent to retake it again for France.

The young man was ready with his excuses. He had heard a rumour, he said, that the English were preparing an attack on Holland, and also that the Duke of Brunswick was about to enter Westphalia in the north. It seemed to him that his wisest course would be to return to his own kingdom, which he was prepared to do immediately. But this plan was scotched by his angry brother, who ordered him, instead, to co-operate with his old friend, Junot, now the Duc d'Abantés, in descending on Bavaria and crushing the Austrians there. Jerome complied, but everything went wrong. He was late again, and this time retreated upon Leipzig.

"You make war like a satrap," Napoleon hurled at

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him in a furious letter, and he advised him to stay at home in his seraglio if he could not conduct himself like a soldier.

So Jerome returned ingloriously to Cassel. where more difficulties awaited him. He had given to Rewbell the task of protecting Brunswick and the northern area of Westphalia from the Duke of Brunswick, who was rousing the people to revolt, but this Rewbell failed to do, and he failed, too, to capture the Duke, who slipped through his hands and escaped to England. But in order to hearten his reluctant troops, Rewbell had promised them that they should have the spoils of the city of Brunswick; then, not daring to fulfil his promise to them, he wrote to Jerome asking that the soldiers be paid in cash for the spoils they were not, now, to receive.

The news that Rewbell had made such promises to his troops and now wished him to help him out of his difficulty by sending money, was enough to ruin him in Jerome's eyes for ever. It was not easy to outrage his feelings, but Rewbell had accomplished it. Jerome had no taste for violence and bloodshed, and such a disgraceful method of carrying on a war filled him with horror. He at once recalled his old companion and crony and ordered him to leave the country. When Henrietta tried to intercede for her husband, he said, as though a decree of banishment from his presence were the worst thing that could befall a man :

"Better for you and for him that he were dead."

"Oh, I do not at all agree with you, your Majesty," said Henrietta with spirit, though she was far from pleased with her husband's behaviour. "I have been wanting to return to America and my family for a long time."

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"Then you are at liberty to do so."

And as Henrietta went to pack her boxes, she must have remembered a day, soon after the Chases' ball, when she and Elizabeth, looking out of the windows of the Pascault home in Baltimore, had seen Jerome and Rewbell approaching the house, arm in arm.

"You are going to marry the one; I will marry the other," Elizabeth had said. How long ago that seemed, and how much had happened since! She had not been very happy in Westphalia, and it would be good to be at home again. As for her husband, his disgrace could be covered up. No one at home need know. He had lost his head, he told her, and his troops had become restive. He had never really intended that they should sack the city. But they left a few days later, without seeing Jerome again, and a link, though sometimes a mischievous one, between Jerome and Elizabeth, was forever broken.

Catherine was back again, and life in Napoleonshöhe and the Bellevue-Schloss went on as before. Ruin stared the country in the face, but the extravagant life at the Court continued—and even increased. At last Bourienne, the French envoy in Hamburg—he was said to be busily filling his own pockets there—made Jerome a loan of three hundred thousand francs. It was so small a loan that it hardly warranted the present Jerome sent him of a portrait of himself set in diamonds. Napoleon heard of it through his informers, and promptly ordered Bourienne to return the gift.

"I am not a king in my own kingdom," Jerome complained to Catherine. "I am scolded, supervised, spied upon, punished like a child. Jollivet reports to Napoleon what we eat for breakfast, how many times

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a day we wash our hands. It is intolerable. Either Jollivet must go, or I shall give up the throne and retire to France as a private citizen."

And he wrote such hurt and indignant letters to Napoleon that the Emperor's heart was softened somewhat, and Jerome and Catherine were summoned to Paris for a visit. They found the Emperor in the midst of preparations for the divorce of Josephine (Catherine was not taken by surprise; she had been Josephine's confidante on that visit to Strasbourg, and her heart ached for her). But in spite of affairs of such urgency and delicacy, there was time to discuss, at great length, the situation in Westphalia, and the difficulties in which Jerome found himself. For while it was easy enough to be angry with Jerome at a distance, it was not so easy to keep one's anger at boiling-point when he was near, there was something so winning and disarming in his gentleness and good nature. Napoleon found himself weakening towards him, and the visit ended by his handing over to his brother a large part of Hanover (which later proved to be only an added liability), and by conferring on the devoted Fürstenstein the Legion of Honour. Then the pair, with their suite, returned hopefully to Cassel.

But the divorce was causing Catherine a good deal of uneasiness. There was a certain superficial resemblance between the brothers, and moreover Jerome liked to imitate Napoleon in as many ways as he could. She, like Josephine, had no child. What then, might not Jerome do, with his brother's example before him? She was humble and she was loyal, and she believed that if he ever did consider divorcing her, he would only be acting in the best interests of his kingdom.

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What could she do to protect herself from such a disaster? There was his little son, by his first wife . . . would not his presence in Westphalia help to console Jerome, perhaps, for the fact that he had no son by her? She felt that it might. Cautiously, tactfully, she now began to broach the matter.

"Forgive me if I speak of things you wish to forget, my treasure," she said one day, as they were walking in the park of Napoleonshöhe, "but do you not sometimes long to see your son in America? I think, very often, how sad it is that you should never have seen him, never once. Your own little son! "

Jerome looked at her in some surprise. He imagined that this was a subject she would prefer never to speak of.

"You ask me," he said, a little uncomfortably, "so I must answer. It is true, I often think of him, and wish I could see him. But that is not possible, so I put it out of my mind."

"But surely," she persisted, "it is possible, if you wish it. And me, I would have no objections, none at all. I, too, would like to see your son."

He patted her arm. "My good little Catherine! You are always wise and generous."

"Then think of it, Jerome, I implore you! Soon, some day, we will have children of our own, you and I; I am certain of it; but now—surely it might be possible to bring him here. Let us try. Why should not his mother allow him to come, perhaps for a short while? Such a wonderful experience it would be for a child, to spend, perhaps, some years here. We would treat him like a little prince, and I would do all in my power to be a mother to him, while he was with us."

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He shook his head.

"I am sure they would never let him come. Never."

"But try, Jerome, try! Could not Alexandre. . . ?"

"Not Alexandre. I could not spare him." He had already guessed what she had in mind. "I could send his brother, perhaps."

"Then do! So delightful it would be to have a child—*your* child—in the palace, until the time comes when *our* children will be there! "

He was surprised at Catherine's generosity. Most women would have disliked the thought extremely. His mind ran ahead, pictured the boy already there. He would teach him to ride, to shoot, to use a sword. He should learn languages, he should learn good manners, the ways of a court. He saw himself taking the child by the hand and showing him all the little temples and grottoes, the pretty waterfalls which dashed so naturally down the hill-sides (they could only be turned on for a short while, each day, as the water had to be pumped to the top; an amusing idea, especially to one who, like himself, had seen Niagara!). He would show him the great statue of Hercules, the charming wooded paths, the curious objects in the palace, calculated to delight a child. Yes, Catherine was right, it was an excellent idea. It was curious that they had no children—Catherine was healthy, robust, a born mother; and as for him, heaven knew there had been alarms and tears often enough, and young ladies sent away into the country for a while, and arrangements made with good, respectable folk on farms, and in cottages . . . well, well, they need not give up hope; all in good time, perhaps.

So Le Camus was dispatched on his mission, and

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Catherine fully expected the plan to succeed, but her hopes were twice dashed by Elizabeth's refusal. She thought her selfish, and said so.

"I would part with my child, if I had one. Yes certainly, for his good. One must not always think of oneself."

But the project, destined to failure, was presently abandoned. Jerome did not even show Catherine the last of Elizabeth's provocative letters. Indeed, there were too many other things to think about. A new country place, Shönfeld, was presently bought, lying between Cassel and Napoleonshöhe, and sometimes Jerome would slip away for a night there, alone—or so Catherine believed.

"It is good for you, my dear one, to have a few hours to yourself. So much you have to do and to think about."

That year there was a dreadful scandal about Blanche La Flèche, now the Baroness Keudelstein, a scandal in which the Marquis de Maubreuil was involved, and not only the handsome, sinister Marquis, but Catherine's own brother as well, the Prince Royal of Würtemberg. It was all very distressing. Her brother had been visiting them, and had fallen in love, in his stubborn, heavy, charmless way, with Blanche, Jerome's most favoured mistress. Catherine had wondered a good deal that her brother, who had always neglected her, should lately have become so fond and attentive, even following her to Ems when she went there with some of her ladies—Blanche Keudelstein among them—for a cure. When she heard of the scandal, she was quite genuinely shocked and disgusted. Briefly, the Prince, her brother, had made a terrible scene, and was in a jealous fury because he had

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learnt that the Marquis de Maubreuil had discovered the Baroness with a lover and had horse-whipped them both.

"Really, my dear," Catherine said to Jerome, when she heard the story, "after this I cannot, I really cannot keep her here any longer. You are right, she must go. Yes, yes, I know, again and again lately you have said that I must dismiss her, but I could not believe—but now, my own brother—it is too much! And you say that the Baron Keudelstein too should be dismissed, for dishonesty. How sad it is that people will be so foolish—so wicked and so foolish!"

Indeed, Jerome, miserably jealous, especially of Catherine's brother, could not see the last of Blanche quickly enough. Time and again her charms had overcome his jealousy, time and again he had overlooked her unfaithfulness, but this was, as Catherine said, too much! Three rivals, and one of them his brother-in-law, was excessive. He was restless and irritable until she went. But out of sight, out of mind; and not a pang did he feel when he heard that the Prince had set her up in a villa on the shores of Lake Constance.

Catherine never suspected his real reasons for wanting to get rid of the Baroness. How could she? They were happy, she and Jerome, and he was the best of husbands and of friends. When poor Pichon drifted to Westphalia after having been removed from Washington by Napoleon's orders for certain alleged irregularities respecting funds, Jerome, remembering all the trouble he had caused him in the past, made him head of the Treasury! There was no one so good, so kind as her husband.

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All would have gone happily enough but for this perpetual worry about money. The Emperor now ordered that the great fortress of Magdebourg be repaired and its defences strengthened, and it was going to cost Westphalia no less than three million francs! Where was the money to come from? Where could it come from, but from the earnings of the people? How could they hope, then, to make themselves popular sovereigns when they had to heap on taxes, more and yet more taxes?

It was the year of the baptism of the little King of Rome. Napoleon always liked his family about him on such great occasions. Their last journey to Paris had been for the wedding—Catherine got on quite as well with Marie Louise as she had with Josephine—and now they were summoned there again. They looked upon it as an opportunity of once more imploring Napoleon's help, but this time the only result was that more demands were made upon them, and severer lectures delivered. Economize, economize, economize! was the burden of them all. As if economy would produce the enormous sums required! They returned to Cassel more than ever convinced that their only course was to be gay, to keep up appearances, to give balls, to enjoy life and to forget their difficulties. When Catherine's birthday was celebrated, Jerome knew just how to make the day a memorable one for his friends.

"We will give Alexandre two hundred thousand francs, and we will give Prince Hesse-Philippsthal" (he was the Chamberlain) "two hundred and forty thousand." And to help pay for these lavish gifts that made Jerome feel so splendidly royal, he persuaded the people of Cassel to make a birthday present to the

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Queen of four hundred thousand francs out of their own pockets. And somehow the money was found.

Soon after, with the assistance of a loan from Jordis, the banker, they found themselves able to give more balls, more masquerades, more theatricals.

"*Le roi*," wrote Reinhard to Napoleon, "*est toujours aimable*."

Why not, when it was so amusing to devise fresh costumes, novel entertainments; to keep himself and the ladies and gentlemen of the Court from knowing a moment's boredom? One night, by his order, the whole company changed their costumes three times, appearing the first time as playing cards, the second time as the rivers and towns of Westphalia, the third time as Egyptians. People grew quite expert in the art of make-up. One night Catherine surprised them all by dressing herself as an American Indian squaw, and playing the part so well that Jerome, who had seen Indians, was quite delighted by her skill.

"You really are an excellent actress, my little wife. All my compliments!"

It was so kind of him to praise her. There were husbands who would not have taken the trouble, especially when there were so many lovely ladies to be noticed and to be flattered.

But in the midst of these gaieties, a shadow fell. Jerome took Catherine aside one day, and walking up and down one of the *allées* of the park, where the buds were swelling and birds flying in and out of the lime trees with straws in their beaks, he told her that war with Russia was threatening, and that he had been ordered, by Napoleon, to pay him a secret and hasty visit to Paris.

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This news fell on Catherine's heart with the dull heaviness of earth upon a coffin. She felt cold, frightened. She felt the chill breath of disaster, and looked up at him apprehensively with her big china-blue eyes, her face suddenly wan and tragic.

"War with Russia! Oh, must it be? Are you quite sure? I do not like it, oh, I do not like it! So great a country, and so far away!"

"Courage, little wife! Do not anticipate trouble. It will perhaps be one of Napoleon's quickest and most successful campaigns."

"But you, dear one, what will you do?"

"I hope he will offer me the command of at least sixty thousand men."

And indeed it seemed that he was to be given yet another trial. He returned from Paris within a week, jubilant. He had got his command, history would have to reckon with him now; he would show the whole world what he could do, if only enough confidence were placed in him. Catherine looked at him with a mingling of adoration and fear. She might lose him, he might die on the battle-field. Tears welled into her eyes. She clasped him in her arms and pressed him again and again against her full bosom.

"I can bear anything, anything, my dear one, if only you will come safely back to me."

He had no doubts at all.

"Perhaps," he said, smiling, "I will come back king of Poland as well."

She braced herself to meet new duties, new and heavy responsibilities. The Emperor, passing through Dresden with the greatest army the world had ever seen, and accompanied thus far by Marie Louise, sent for Cather-

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ine to join them there. She must now, he told her, take over, with the help of her ministers, the reins of government. He said he had the greatest faith in her discretion and her ability, and, nearly overcome by the solemnity of the moment, she vowed that she would never, never disappoint him.

It would have been easier, however, if she had not been so mistrustful of her subjects. For she and Jerome and all they stood for were far from popular, there was no denying it. Those who did not hate them were indifferent to them. It was not pleasant to return to the palace alone, to listen, after dark, to sounds that might or might not be the clatter of galloping hoofs, and to think of the carriage and six horses that each night stood ready (and had stood ready each night for months past) in case flight from the palace became necessary. But she would not fail those who trusted her and looked to her to set an example of courage and firmness to the rest.

No one whispered to her that Jerome had not left Cassel without a female companion. No one told her that a pretty girl for whom he had recently found a complacent husband, was also absent from her home, and that she and her obliging mother had accompanied the King as far as Kalish. Nor, if they had told her, would she have believed it.

And now once again Jerome was to exhibit his extraordinary lack of all the soldierly virtues. He was late at Grodno, later still in leaving it to pursue an enemy that fell back, and fell back, leading the French army farther and farther from its base. Sickness reduced his forces, his soldiers followed him without enthusiasm, thinking of their impoverished homes with anxiety and

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longing; nothing that he did was right. "You are compromising the whole success of the right wing," Napoleon complained. "It is impossible to make war in this way." And he took Jerome's command from him and gave it to Davout instead. (Davout, with whose brother he had once fought a duel, and whose bullet still lodged in his breast.) Humiliated and angry, Jerome asked that he might be sent instead to the coast, in the event of an attack by the English, a request that was not granted. There was nothing for it but to return to Cassel.

He wrote to Catherine from Warsaw:

You must say only that I have asked for leave to return home because I am unable to bear the changes of climate, and that the Emperor has granted my request.

He reached Cassel in August, and so missed all the horrors, all the long agony of the Russian campaign, and Catherine and the Baroness Lowenstein comforted him, each in her different way. He busied himself in redecorating the palaces, and in improving the acoustics of the opera house in Cassel, while the soldiers of Westphalia died in their thousands upon the battle-fields of Russia.

And at last, Napoleon, speeding to Paris, in December, and leaving what was left of the shattered Grand Army in winter quarters on the Vistula, found both the time and the inclination to read Reinhard's secret reports about the incurable frivolity of his youngest brother.

But Jerome was at last beginning to perceive, since

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the dreadful debacle of Moscow, that the day for frivolity, for balls and masquerades and ballets, was nearly over. He began to foresee, dimly, the beginning of the end. He began, too late, to retrench, to simplify, to encourage evenings of whist rather than evenings devoted to lavish entertainments.

"We must remember we are growing old," he said genially to a mutinous lady of the Court.

"Growing old!" Catherine, hearing him say this, would be convulsed with laughter. Jerome was only twenty-nine and, but for the lines about his eyes, would have looked still younger. Nevertheless, she was not at all displeased by these new regulations. It was pleasant to play whist with a few friends and to go to bed at nine, especially as she now suspected—oh, if it would only prove to be true!—that her longing for a child might yet be realized. If times were only less bad, the news less depressing!

"Napoleon does not wish me to come to Paris," Jerome told her, crestfallen, for he had offered his help to his brother in any capacity whatever. "He says my presence here will be more useful. But what is there to do here? I have no longer an army. There is no money. And he wants me to strengthen Magdebourg still further, which would mean the expenditure of at least another million francs."

He was very much depressed. Madame Lowenstein's charms were beginning to pall, and he now turned to Madame Mallet, a lady he had lately appointed as reader and writer to Catherine. Madame Mallet had long and patiently awaited an opportunity of enticing him from the Baroness Lowenstein, who disliked her and whom she disliked. But Madame Lowenstein,

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bitterly jealous and suffering agonies of hurt pride, contrived to let Catherine know, or suspect, what was going on, and so cleverly was it done that Catherine believed that she herself had discovered the dreadful thing. Which meant that Madame Lowenstein was not involved in the quarrel—the very first of its kind—that followed.

Catherine, her suspicions thus cunningly aroused, one day discovered Jerome in Madame Mallet's room. What she would have sworn could not possibly be true, she saw with her own eyes. She wept, fainted, had hysterics; it seemed as though all her married life, all her happiness dissolved in those few agonizing minutes of discovery. Jerome carried her, struggling and sobbing, to her room—she was no light burden—laid her on a sofa, sat by her and tried to calm her. When he could at last persuade her to listen to him, he said:

"But my little wife, what is it, what are all these tears about? What has upset you so? That I was in Madame Mallet's room? But my treasure, that means nothing. Nothing at all. What? You suspect *me*, your own husband, of—— Oh, Catherine, Catherine, this is unworthy of you!"

"But I saw you! I saw you kiss her. I saw. I have suspected for some time, but I could not, I *could* not speak of it! I saw, I tell you. I am not a fool. You thought I was blind. Well, now I know, I *know* that you no longer love me—oh, oh, how can I bear to live? I would like to die, to die! It is all finished, all our happiness is finished, for ever."

He stroked her hair with his small, white hand, a hand as fine and shapely as any woman's.

"You talk nonsense, my dear one. Hush, hush, no

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more crying. All this is very bad for you. Especially at this time."

"You should have thought of that!" and again she gave way to a storm of tears.

In Catherine's pink satin and gold boudoir, that had witnessed many a happy domestic scene, he knelt by the sofa on which she lay tossing and turning in an agony of mind, dried her tears, kissed her, chafed her hands and wrists when she grew hysterical, reasoned with her, pleaded with her. At last, a doubt entered her mind. Could a guilty man behave in this way? It seemed impossible. Perhaps she was making far too much of a trivial thing, perhaps she was being cruel, unjust. She was almost ready to ask for his forgiveness when once more the picture she had seen flashed before her eyes. No, no, no! People do not kiss like that unless . . . unless they are lovers. Oh, if that were true, how could she bear it? How could she go on living? She wept again.

"Listen to me, my angel. I kissed Madame Mallet. Yes. It was a moment of folly. We all have our moments of folly. Do you not remember the night you danced six times with De Pappenheim? Did I not forgive you? Madame Mallet does not attract me, not in the least, I swear it! Why I kissed her, I do not know. It has never happened before, it will never happen again. On an impulse I went to her room to speak to her about a book. I swear I had only been there an instant. Perhaps, without meaning to, she looked at me invitingly. Or perhaps I imagined it. It was nothing." (If Catherine had come earlier she would have found the door locked; then, if she had waited for him to come out, the situation would have been far worse. The gods had been kind!) "Do you think, if I had meant to do

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wrong, the door would have been unfastened? ”

“ You thought I had gone to Cassel. I had told you I was going.”

“ I never thought of it. I had forgotten.”

“ Oh, Jerome, Jerome, you are deceiving me! You are lying to me! Oh, how can I go on living? I will write to my father to ask him to take me back, I will, I will! I must tell someone how I suffer, someone who cares for me. So lonely I am, away from all my family. Here there is no one who loves me, no one at all! I will write to my father. I will, I will! ”

In spite of everything he could do or say, in spite, finally, of his forbidding her to do so, she did write to her father. She wrote in a moment of hysteria, almost of insanity, and thrust the letter, secretly, into the hands of a messenger. She told the King what had occurred, and said that her heart was broken and her life utterly ruined. The rage of her by no means moral parent was very great. His daughter, *his* daughter, to be insulted so! He promptly sent for his coach and drove to Napoleonshöhe, and no sooner had he arrived there than Catherine bitterly regretted what she had done. For her father, when angry, was terrible, violent, and most abominably rude. At once she took Jerome's part, defending him with spirit. It was all, all her fault, she cried; there had been a silly misunderstanding, she had made a silly mistake. It was not true at all, what she had said. She had written on an impulse; it was a great folly, of which she was heartily ashamed. Jerome was a model husband, she was perfectly happy with him, and she implored her father to forget the whole incident. At last the King of Würtemberg withdrew, still angry and suspicious, after saying some very

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hard things to Jerome; things he would not have dreamt of saying a year ago. The Napoleonic polonaise was being played now in a very minor key; the lion was sick, and the smaller fry no longer feared him as before. This showed itself plainly enough in King Frederick's manner.

"I made a mistake," he said to Catherine as he departed, "when I allowed you to marry a member of that family."

So Catherine, with tears reddening her big blue eyes, implored her husband's forgiveness, begged him to forget her base suspicions, vowed that she would never, never doubt him again. In the pink and gold boudoir they embraced, and all was forgiven.

"That is my good little wife, my good little Catherine. Now we will be happy once more."

But it was too dangerous, now, to carry on his affair with Madame Mallet any longer. He returned to the triumphant Baroness Lowenstein.

For the moment, however, he was losing his taste for intrigues. Things were going too badly. Following upon the Russian debacle, there came, it was true, the temporary victory of Dresden, but this was soon robbed of all its fruits. Bavaria now went over, completely, to the enemy, and Jerome trembled for the fate of his own kingdom and for France. What hope had the Emperor now of driving back the forces allied against him since his own armies were chiefly made up of boys in their teens? What was going to happen next? What miracle could save the situation? Partly to hide his own nervousness, partly because he felt she really would be safer there, Jerome sent Catherine to Paris, and stayed on in Napoleonshöhe alone. It was lucky that

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he did so, for there came a dreadful night when the Cossacks were at the very gates of the palace, and Jerome only just managed to escape on horseback to Coblenz, where the news reached him that the people of Cassel had given the Cossacks a hearty welcome and had rallied to them with enthusiasm. But he gathered together his generals and his troops, and after a really formidable attack, once more gained possession of the town and returned to his palace.

"Make severe examples, your Majesty," his generals advised, but it was not in Jerome's nature to do so. He had the supreme virtue of kindness, and though some of the disloyal townsfolk were thrown into prison, there were no executions and no further bloodshed. He guessed, perhaps, that the situation was hopeless.

Then came the final disaster of Leipzig, and Jerome knew that the time had come for him to leave a kingdom he could no longer hope to hold. In secret, and at night, he slipped away—not forgetting to take with him the royal jewels and all the valuables that could be carried—and, with part of his suite and such troops as would follow him, he sought refuge in Cologne.

Within ten days of his leaving it, the people of Cassel, gone mad with joy, were dragging the Elector of Hesse through the streets in his coach; and Jerome, a little uncertain of his welcome in Paris, was making his way towards it, a good deal dispirited, but pleased to have got away alive, and not without some hope for the future.

He had instructed Catherine to go to Meudon and find a *château* there which would be suitable for them, as a *pied-à-terre* in France if all went well, or as a haven of refuge if all went ill. Now he turned in that direc-

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tion, only to be forestalled by Napoleon, who, learning his whereabouts, and hearing from Catherine what he intended, wrote to forbid him to think of buying an estate at such a critical moment. It would only, he said, create the worst possible impression. He ordered him to go to Aix-la-Chapelle instead, where various members of the family had already gathered, but this Jerome, who decided it was time to assert himself, refused to do. He agreed, however, to go to the house of his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, in Paris, that uncle who was so beloved and so respected by all the family. So he and Catherine met again under the Cardinal's splendid roof, and there, too, he found his mother, calm, philosophical and resigned.

"Be careful, be especially careful of money," she warned them all. "No one knows what will happen. We must save every penny."

But the Allies were marching on Paris, and Jerome and Catherine decided to take refuge in Blois, where Marie Louise had already gone with the little King of Rome.

"All is not over, my dear one," said Catherine when they reached this temporary haven. "We still have each other. And much may yet be saved." And in her faithful eyes he read her determination not to submit too tamely to the fate that had overtaken them. She was a splendid woman, his Catherine, and perhaps it might prove to be a helpful circumstance that her father had now gone over to the Allies. He might be able to produce generous terms for them.

"At any rate," Jerome said, "we can always be certain of a home in Würtemberg, and to live in a palace not too far from Stuttgart would not be so bad."

But Marie Louise was now urged to leave Blois, with

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the boy, and go to Orleans, and when Jerome decided that it was his duty to accompany them, and see them safely to their destination, Catherine seized the opportunity, gladly enough, to go to Paris. She would see her father—the Allies had now assembled there, and the fate of Napoleon was being decided—and she would see the Tzar Alexander. Was not the Tzarina her relation, and had she not always been kind? It was not only for herself and Jerome that she would have to fight, but for her child as well. For at last there was no possible doubt about it, a child would be born that summer. Now that there was no longer a kingdom for him to inherit, she was perhaps to give Jerome a son. It was sad, but it was the way things happened in this unaccountable world.

She reached Paris in safety, and made inquiries, first, as to the whereabouts of her brother. He was lodging in a handsome hotel in the Faubourg, and she drove there, eager to see him and to discuss with him her future and Jerome's. She was admitted only as far as the inner gates. Her brother refused to see her. Instead he sent his minister, M. de Wintzingerode, with a message.

"Tell her," he instructed his ambassador, "that as long as she is married to a Bonaparte she need not regard herself as a sister of mine. Tell her she will receive asylum at my father's court only if she agrees to give up her husband."

Catherine was astounded, utterly dismayed. She looked at M. de Wintzingerode with stricken eyes, then, convinced that it was useless to say anything more, turned away and got into her carriage. From her room in Cardinal Fesch's house she wrote at once to her

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father, telling him of her brother's cruel rebuff:

M. de Wintzingerode . . . assured me, my dear father, that it is not your idea, nor could I ever have imagined that your paternal heart dictated it. . . . Married to a king whom I did not know, my conduct guided at the time by important political considerations, I grew to love him, and I carry within me to-day his unborn child. [Were Jerome's children always to be born during distressful times?] He has been the cause of my happiness for seven years, by his sweet and loving acts; but had he been the worst of husbands, I should not have abandoned him in misfortune.

Nor did her loyal heart remind her that if she had abandoned him, it would have been no worse than his abandonment of his first wife nearly ten years before.

But another blow awaited her. When her father replied to her letter, she learnt, with a sinking heart, that it was actually with his authority that her brother had stated those brutal terms. How could he, how could he be so cruel? Oh, if only there had not been that miserable trouble over Madame Mallet! If only she had said nothing! How foolish she had been, and how disloyal! But for her own wickedness, her father might have been willing to receive them both in Stuttgart.

She turned, instead, to the Tzar Alexander, and went hurrying off to see him at the Hôtel Talleyrand, where he was installed. He proved kind. He was at least willing to give her a pension and to interest himself in her welfare. Victory had made him generous, and after all, Napoleon would soon be on his way to Elba.

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Catherine could do no harm, and he respected her honesty and good faith.

She felt happier when she learnt of his intentions than she had felt for some time. There was still goodwill in people's hearts. If only Cardinal Fesch and Madame Mère had been in Paris, she would have been still further comforted, but they, too, had gone to Orleans, and from there were to go on together to Rome. Jerome wrote that his mother was setting an example of fortitude and steadfastness to all of them, and Catherine took this very much to heart. What she herself had to bear, she told herself, was nothing compared to the troubles borne by Napoleon's mother, who was about to see her son go into exile. But was it so very much worse to have a son on the island of Elba, where one could, perhaps, visit him from time to time, than to have him perpetually in danger of his life on the battle-fields of Europe? Perhaps, from the point of view of a mother, it was not. And she, alone of all the family, had been prepared for this catastrophe. Over and over again she had warned them all, and they had neither listened nor believed. "If I," thought Catherine, "can conduct myself as splendidly in misfortune as she has done, I shall have acquitted myself well." And she made her preparations to leave Paris and, following Jerome's instructions, to set out for Berne, where he had promised to meet her.

He sent Fürstenstein to Paris, to accompany her on her journey. Times were so unsettled that it was wiser to take precautions when travelling. People hardly knew, now, how to treat a Bonaparte. They lined the roads when they passed by, but in silence; there was no cheering. Catherine had been in France so little that

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she knew she would not be recognized as a member of the family, and she expected the journey to be quite uneventful. All the same, it was a comfort to have the devoted Fürstenstein with her, as well as the Duchess of Bockholtz, who had replaced one of the original Court ladies, for Jerome had given into her care all the valuables he had brought out of Westphalia, and nearly all the money.

"They will be safer with you than with me," he had said.

They travelled by way of Nemours, and all went well enough for the first part of the journey. Once a little group of men passed them, riding fast, and catching a glimpse of the face of one of them, she said to Fürstenstein:

"Surely, Alexandre, that was someone we know well. Surely it was the Marquis de Maubreuil."

They had not seen De Maubreuil—who had been sent away to Spain after the scandal with Blanche Keudelstein—for some time, but she was certain she could not be mistaken. Fürstenstein, too, had recognized him.

"He must have seen us," Catherine said. "Why did he not speak to us, then? Because we no longer have a kingdom?"

"After that unfortunate affair," said Fürstenstein, "he may think himself in disgrace."

"Still," said Catherine, troubled, "we knew him so well. It was not friendly."

They had to wait twenty hours at Nemours, because the fresh horses they had expected to find there had already been taken by the Marquis, and other fresh horses were hard to find.

"Then he surely cannot have recognized us," said

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Catherine, who was always charitable, "or he never would have inconvenienced us in this way."

They put up at the most comfortable hotel in the town, and while the ladies rested, Fürstenstein went out to explore the place and to stretch his legs. He wished also to consider his altered circumstances and to make up his mind whether to follow Jerome into exile, to look for another patron, or to settle down with his wife's parents. His wanderings took him farther afield than he had intended, so that he missed an historic incident. For Napoleon, on his journey to Elba, passed through Nemours, and Fürstenstein never ceased to regret that he had been walking in the fields on the other side of the town when he might so easily have been a witness of it.

When he returned to the inn he found it humming with excitement, and the landlord made haste to tell him what had taken place. First came a great clattering of hoofs and rolling of wheels, and then the astonishing procession itself. The Emperor, the landlord said, was sitting in his berline, very erect, with Bertrand beside him. Behind them came a little troop of cavalry, the horses very tired and covered with foam, for all, it appeared, wished to get the journey over as quickly as possible. Then followed the generals; then the Allied Commissioners: Austrian, English, French, Prussian. Then came a long string of carriages containing luggage, twenty carriages, it was said, full of the Emperor's effects alone. Altogether it was a procession to make people rush to their doors. The lady upstairs had heard the noise and came hurrying down to see who was passing.

"And I assure you, sir," the landlord said, seizing the lapel of Fürstenstein's coat, "the Emperor saw her and called to the driver of the berline to stop, and the whole

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procession, yes, the whole procession came to a standstill here, outside my very door, while the Emperor and the lady who is with your party, bade each other good-bye. It was, I assure you, the most touching and interesting episode. I do not, that is understood, wish to pry into matters that do not concern me, but if you would consent to tell me the lady's name . . ."

Fürstenstein brushed the man aside and hurried up the stairs. The Duchess of Bockholtz came to Catherine's door and opened it to him. He saw Catherine sitting bowed in a chair, a handkerchief to her eyes. At the sound of his voice she raised a face wet and swollen with tears.

"I have seen him!" she cried. "He has been, and he has gone! Oh, Alexandre, never, never did I think to see him again—and at such a time. Oh, it is too much, it is too much!"

"They told me downstairs," he said soothingly. "They told me you had spoken to him."

"Yes. I heard them coming and ran out. Perhaps it was indiscreet, but somehow I guessed, and I could not stay in the house, I could not. He saw me, and at once he called to the driver to stop. So the whole procession stopped, and everyone came hurrying forward to learn the reason. He got out of his carriage—only Bertrand was with him—and he took me into his arms. Oh, Alexandre, I could not keep back my tears! He was calm, quite calm. He told me to be brave . . . he who is always so brave himself . . . he kissed me . . . he kissed me more than once . . . and said good-bye. And now he has gone! Before, I could not realize . . . it seemed just an evil dream, all that has happened. But now . . . now I do realize. Everything

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is over. Everything, everything is over! ”

And she laid her arms on a table and bowed her head on them, sobbing loudly, like a child. Fürstenstein and the Duchess tried to comfort her, but for a long time she continued to sob as though she would never cease. At last, when she had had her cry out, she stopped quite suddenly, saying, “Oh, how selfish I am!” and dried her eyes and got up. “Now I am better,” she said. “Now I will be good. I promise I will be good.”

Early the next morning they were on their way again. It was a fresh, bright day when they started, and the country looked charming, for the hedges were just turning green, and the tree-buds all swelling and breaking into leaf. Children were gathering wild flowers, and the sight soothed Catherine and reassured her. Life went on, and life could be sweet. It was folly to give way to melancholy. Her child would not inherit a kingdom, but he would inherit a world annually renewed by the miracle of spring, he would inherit flowers and birds and sunshine and friendship. She began to feel more cheerful, and tried not to mind when big dark clouds began to come up over the horizon and merge overhead, and rain began to fall. It had been an exquisite morning, and one that she would not soon forget.

They were about half-way between Nemours and Dijon, when they saw, motionless in the road ahead, a group of horsemen. As they drew nearer, this group did not move aside, but resolutely blocked the way, ignoring the shouts of the driver. One of them detached himself from the rest and rode towards them, and Catherine, to her great surprise, recognized the Marquis de Maubreuil.

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"He wishes to speak to us," she said to Fürstenstein.

He rode up to the carriage door, and without a word of greeting, without even lifting his hat, said:

"Madame, I regret it will be necessary for you to turn aside. I must request that you follow me for half a mile or so." He indicated a small road that branched off to the right. "Kindly order your driver to turn down there, and to proceed until he is told to stop. We will see that the rest of your suite follows."

Catherine was so astonished that at first she could hardly speak.

"But, surely," she said, "you know me, Monsieur le Marquis? It is the Queen of Westphalia. You cannot have forgotten. And my lady-in-waiting, the Duchess of Bockholtz, and Count Fürstenstein. You remember us, surely. We are on our way to Berne to join the King."

"The Marquis," said Fürstenstein, smiling, "mistook you for someone else."

But there was a look on that sinister, handsome face that he did not like.

"Certainly," De Maubreuil said, "I recognized you. I passed you on the road three days ago."

"Then why are you stopping us?" Catherine demanded. "I do not understand."

De Maubreuil beckoned to another horseman, who promptly rode up and joined them.

"M. Dasies," said De Maubreuil, "is an agent of the police. You are suspected of having in your possession certain crown jewels and other valuables that do not belong to you."

In vain Catherine, Count Fürstenstein and the Duchess raised their voices in indignant protest. They were now surrounded by De Maubreuil's men, one of

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whom, well armed, mounted the box beside the driver, while another took the leading horse by the bridle.

"But I have a passport from the Tzar of Russia!" cried Catherine. "This is infamous. Infamous!"

M. Dasies produced papers to prove that he was a police agent, and had the right of search, and held them unpleasantly close to Catherine's face.

"Come," said De Maubreuil, "we are wasting time. No more argument. We will conduct our search at a little distance from here, so as not to inconvenience other travellers."

The carriage gave a lurch and a jerk, and the little procession moved off down the rough road, a mere cart-track leading to a deserted farm. Here they were all turned out, in the rain, and one by one they were forced to submit to a careful search. While this was going on, others of De Maubreuil's party prised open the boxes containing the valuables.

"I assure you, I swear to you," cried Catherine, again and again, "that there is not one thing among our possessions which was not brought out of Westphalia by my husband. It is an insult. I am no thief, and you know it. It is robbery."

"Come, come!" said De Maubreuil smoothly. "In troubled times like these, even quite honest persons may be tempted to provide for the future. It is useless to protest, madame. Undoubtedly the valuables my men are taking from your boxes are those we have been sent here to recover."

And Catherine, sitting in a dirty courtyard, saw the contents of each box dumped out on to the ground, and after a brief inspection, put into sacks that had been brought for the purpose. Into them went her

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diamond and emerald tiara, her pearl necklaces, the portrait of Jerome, set in diamonds, that Bourienne had been ordered by Napoleon to return, and then a box of jewelled trinkets, every one of which had been given to her by Jerome. From the hands of one of the despoilers dangled, for an instant, a miniature of herself, set in sapphires and diamonds. All, all went into the sacks. Their money was taken from them, all that Jerome had managed to put by for the future, all that they now had to live upon. Catherine burst into tears, and amidst sobs, implored De Maubreuil not to leave them utterly penniless.

"At least," she cried, "leave me enough to continue the journey to Berne. You cannot, you cannot be so cruel, so wicked, as to deprive me of the means of reaching my husband! What have I ever done to you that you should treat me so vilely? You have eaten at our table, you have been our friend, have pity, have pity, I beseech you!"

"Well," said De Maubreuil, "you have a way of touching a man's heart, and although it is against orders, I will be generous and give you every franc in my possession." He emptied his pockets, smiling. "See? You are in luck! A thousand francs. It might have been worse. There, madame, do not say I am not kind. You may now continue your journey in comfort. And pray tell your husband, when you see him, how well you have been treated."

Fürstenstein, like his master, was not a man of blood. Besides, except for a sword, he was unarmed. And De Maubreuil's men were armed with swords and pistols. It was useless to struggle. He sat and scowled, and saw himself deprived of all that he had brought with him.

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Luckily for him he had not brought very much, but had left most of his money and valuables with his wife. The Duchess, too, was travelling fairly lightly, and bore the loss of her few jewels and little money with resignation. It was something that they were not to be murdered as well.

"I will leave two men behind," said De Maubreuil, when the job was done, "to see that you do not follow us. In an hour you may go on your way. But be sure that it is in the direction of Berne, or you will regret it."

The shock had been almost too much for Catherine. When they had once more reached the main road she felt too faint and ill to go farther at present. Besides, she knew she must take some action in the hope of recovering what they had lost. So they put up at the nearest inn, and there she wrote a long letter to the only person to whom she could turn in this emergency—the Tzar of Russia. She sent it by messenger to Paris, and decided to remain at the inn until she received an answer. It came by the hand of one of the Tzar's own aides-de-camp, whom he had sent to escort her the rest of the way.

"How good he is!" she said to Fürstenstein. "Kinder to me than father or brother!"

The remainder of the journey was without incident, and when she reached Berne and found Jerome anxiously waiting for her there, her relief and thankfulness were so great as to make the loss of their possessions seem not quite so terrible, though it was bad enough. Perhaps the culprits would be caught, and their money and valuables returned. Meanwhile, they could look to Madame Mère for help.

They stayed in Berne until June, but did not find the

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people of the city particularly friendly to them. For a long time they continued to hope that the stolen things would be restored to them, but they hoped in vain. A few were found, but these the Bourbons claimed and kept. It seemed as though someone—perhaps not the Bourbons themselves, but someone well in the background—were resolved to protect both De Maubreuil and Dasies, for though they were arrested, they were soon released again, possibly because De Maubreuil knew, and threatened to tell, too much. The whole episode was mysterious and disturbing. What, Jerome and Catherine often asked each other, had become of the rest of the jewels? Was it true, as certain rumours hinted, that De Maubreuil's real mission had been to assassinate Napoleon? (There were plenty who wished him safely dead.) Failing that, had he decided, on his own initiative, to rob Napoleon's sister-in-law? It was even whispered that Talleyrand had instigated a plot to kill the Emperor, and had chosen De Maubreuil as his instrument, but this suggestion was scoffed at. At any rate, whatever the explanation, the Marquis and his accomplices remained at large, and nothing was done.

Catherine's father was quite unmoved by their misfortunes, and merely renewed his previous offer to take her back provided that she would leave her husband.

"How can the best of fathers," poor Catherine wrote, "wish to destroy my domestic happiness—the only happiness, dare I assure you, dear father, that is left to me?"

In June they left Berne, with few regrets, and went to Graz to join Louis, but could not make up their minds to settle there, and presently made their way to Trieste. And in Trieste, in August, surrounded by

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strangers, and hard pressed for money, Catherine gave birth to a son.

Jerome, while king, had been eager enough for an heir, but now he hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry, there seemed such a poor prospect for the child. But Catherine was happier, infinitely happier, than she had been for some time past. She was a born mother, and with the birth of the child she seemed to acquire a far greater calm and placidity, which suited Jerome excellently. Even in Trieste there were charming women willing and even eager to solace him in his exile, for the glamour of the Bonapartes still hung about him. As for Catherine, she was blind as she had always been. So there they remained that autumn and winter, peacefully enough, and though poor, not at all unhappy. And in the following March, the news reached them of Napoleon's escape from Elba, and his landing in the Gulf of Juan near the town of Cannes.

The news electrified them. Jerome's hopes instantly soared mountain-high. Now, anything was possible once more. He seized his seven-months-old child, lifted him from his cot and tossed him into the air. "Hé! We shall have you on the throne of France one day!" he cried. Once again the Bonaparte star was rising, and miracles would follow. Almost immediately Jerome began to make preparations for departure.

"But must you leave me, my treasure?" Catherine asked anxiously. "What shall I do here without you?"

"Take care of our son and wait for the happier days that are coming. It will not be safe for me to stay here any longer."

"But we have no enemies here."

"Don't be stupid, my little wife. Think! The

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Austrians tolerate me, as an exiled king, but as the brother of a returned conqueror, they may well think me a danger."

"But where will you go? To France?"

"At the moment, to Naples, to join the family. We must make plans. Yes, plans, plans, plans! Louis and Paulette were right. They said he would do it. I did not believe it."

"It is wonderful," she said. "It is too good to be true."

He slipped away one night after bidding Catherine—and one or two other ladies—a tender farewell. "Good-bye, my little wife. Courage! Be brave as always. Take care of our son."

A small boat waited for him, and he made his way successfully to Naples, where he found his sister Caroline Murat—less arrogant, nowadays, than formerly—Lucien and Louis. His mother and Pauline had been visiting Napoleon on the Island of Elba, where their presence had helped to cover his escape. Madame Mère was still there, but Pauline had contrived to reach Italy, with all her luggage and her sedan chair, in a felucca, and was being detained by the Austrians at Campignano. Elisa Bacciochi had likewise been detained in Bologna; Joseph they expected hourly. But four Bonapartes were quite sufficient to form a family council, and there were discussions that lasted far into the night.

"I will serve my brother," Jerome said, striking an attitude, "in any capacity whatsoever. My sword, my loyalty, my life, all are at his disposal."

Her sons and daughters, Madame Mère had once remarked to Cardinal Fesch, had at least one trait in common. They refused to grow up.

CHAPTER XI

ABOUT six months after the news of Napoleon's exile to Elba had reached America, Elizabeth, in Baltimore, was packing her trunks to go to Europe.

Life at home was sad, sad and depressing, and many of her friends, James Randolph among them, had fallen in the war with England. During the years that had passed since her return, there had been four deaths in the family—Octavius (he had always been delicate), Margaret—this was a terrible shock; she had just been married; little Caroline and Mrs. Patterson. No one was greatly surprised, though all Baltimore mourned her, when Mrs. Patterson died, for she had been an invalid for some years. It was an internal complaint, the doctors said, about which nothing could be done. She died very quietly, sorry to leave them all, but with a feeling that perhaps Octavius, Caroline and Margaret needed her most. Mr. Patterson, who felt her loss cruelly, was now left with a large family of sons, and Elizabeth, the last remaining daughter. There was not even, as yet, a daughter-in-law. Robert had hopes of being married soon, but Mary Caton was proving captious and uncertain. She loved him, but she was very happy at home, and it seemed that she could not make up her mind to leave her mother and her three sisters, Elizabeth, Louisa and Emily. And life has so much to offer, apart from marriage, when one is young, beautiful and high-spirited. "Not yet," she kept saying. "Oh, please, not just yet!" So he waited, and

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was more often at the Catons' house than at his own.

William, too, was courting, but William, in any case, had never got on well with Elizabeth. George was improving, and once accompanied her to New York, where they spent a few gay weeks. Edward was too young to be of much use to her, and as for the younger boys, she found them merely troublesome. And her father expected her to settle down at the head of this household and play the part of the dutiful and domestic daughter.

It was too much to ask. The fall of Napoleon had altered everything for her, and her eyes had for some time been turned to Europe. She could go to France now, if she wished; under the Bourbons she could be certain of a kind reception. There was no reason why she should not, if she felt so disposed, live in England.

"I am quite torn in two," she told her friend, Madame Tussard, on her last visit to Washington. "It is a terrible grief to me to see Napoleon overthrown, for now, what hopes has Bo? Also, it means the end of my pension. On the other hand, I could never have gone to France while he was Emperor, and I long to go. For me it is both a tragedy and a godsend, for I honestly believe that one more year in Baltimore would kill me. As it is, I am very far from well."

Mr. Patterson, when he saw that she had made up her mind to go, was bitterly, deeply hurt; how deeply she was not to learn until much later. Her desertion of him and of her brothers seemed to him a sort of treachery. Her duty, her plain duty, lay with them. And Bo? What did she intend to do with Bo? That problem was soon solved, and solved in a way that took

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some of the edge off his bitterness. She intended leaving Bo, for the present, in America, and in a school of which her father heartily approved. She took him to Mount St. Mary's, in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and there, after explaining to the principal all the ways in which Bo was totally unlike other boys, she left him and returned to Baltimore. She was now ready to sail.

"At least," she said to her aunt, Miss Spear, "this time you won't be expected to go with me."

She and Miss Spear got on better nowadays. They had one great interest in common. Both were passionately interested in the saving and investing of money. and Miss Spear, like Elizabeth, was carefully and cautiously acquiring bits of property here and there, or taking up a mortgage, or buying government bonds. With this enthusiasm to be shared, they got on tolerably well. Miss Spear, besides, was quite willing to take over the managing of the house. She liked it. Why, then, should she herself be expected to stay at home, Elizabeth demanded, when such a competent person as Miss Spear was prepared to take her place? What else had Aunt Spear to interest her? Her father's indignation and resentment seemed to her wholly unreasonable and left her quite unmoved.

The Gallatins, father and son, were now in Europe, and had written to Elizabeth that they hoped soon to see her there. Mr. Gallatin was hard at work trying to negotiate a peace that would satisfy England and at the same time prove acceptable to an America that was still incensed over the burning of the Capitol. Young James was acting as his secretary and seeing life. It would be the greatest help to her, Elizabeth well knew,

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if they were still in Europe when she arrived. Mr. Gallatin, though born in Geneva of an old Swiss family, nevertheless looked upon himself as an American citizen, and served his adopted country with devotion and enthusiasm. At the same time he was fully aware of the charms of his native land, and had often told Elizabeth that she must one day visit Switzerland, see its beauties for herself, and meet the famous Madame de Staël, with whom, he was sure, she would find many things in common.

"You pay me too great a compliment when you say that," Elizabeth told him, "but what an honour it would be to meet her!"

Now that extraordinary capacity of hers for travelling like a trunk or a parcel proved invaluable. Once on the boat she retired into herself, hardly seemed to notice her fellow-passengers—who were full of curiosity about her—rested, and gathered strength for her solitary invasion of Europe. How different, how very different, from that last trip abroad! What history had been made and unmade since then! The fall of Napoleon, the greatest event on the world's horizon, had not taken her altogether by surprise, though it seemed to her one of the greatest of tragedies. There, surely, was a man born to rule all Europe (with the sole exception, of course, of England!). To climb so high, to be brought so low! Were great ambitions, she wondered, always so requited? It was a depressing thought to one as ambitious as herself. She had heard nothing of Jerome for some time, and imagined that he and Catherine were in exile. How wise she had been to refuse all his offers! But for her prudence, where might she have been? She was thankful, too, that she had obtained

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her American divorce, for what was more likely than that he would have made, by this time, some claim upon her?

The boat, after contending with a series of autumnal gales, reached Liverpool in just under a month and discharged its cramped and weary passengers. Elizabeth was glad to be on shore again, but she had not really minded the trip; for at last she was going where she wished to go, at last she was free and unhampered. As for danger, she was a fatalist. She believed—it was a quite unreasoning belief—that she was destined to live a long time.

She had made up her mind not to stop in England just yet. That would come later. Peace terms had been settled, the Gallatins were now in Geneva, and she thought it would be advisable to join them. Mr. Gallatin knew so many interesting people—including the great Duke of Wellington—that it would be both pleasing and profitable to place herself under his kindly protection. She hurried through England, which was suffering from excessive rain, by post-chaise, and after spending a night in London, a night in Tonbridge, and a night at Dover, crossed to Dieppe on such a wild day and night that for hours the packet-boat was forced to beat up and down the coast, as it was unable to make the harbour. An unpleasing experience, but Elizabeth was used, now, to such experiences, and suffered herself to be carried to the shore, at last, by a fierce-looking French boatman, with her eyes wearily and patiently closed.

From Dieppe, which seemed to her full of noisy sailors and screaming fish-wives, she took the mail coach to Paris, sleeping at Rouen, where she saw the Cathedral,

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and again at Magny. And in Paris, in company with an American ship-board acquaintance, she shopped, visited the Louvre and made excursions to Fontainebleau, Malmaison and Rambouillet, seeking, a little sadly, traces of the vanished Emperor. But as, apart from her American friend, she had no acquaintances just then in Paris, she presently took coach for Dijon, and from Dijon to Aix, in the Savoie, and from Aix to Geneva, placing herself, gladly enough, under the protection of an elderly Swiss lady and her son, who were travelling the same way.

She reached Geneva after a journey of a little more than a week. The roads had been tolerably clear, and only once were they detained, high in the mountains, by a sudden fall of snow. It was a tiring journey, but interesting enough, and if one wrapped oneself up sufficiently warmly—and she never minded what she looked like when travelling, warmth and comfort were everything—one need come to no harm. If strangers spoke to her they received cold and brief replies, or none at all, for there were apt to be men about whose sharp eyes could pierce through wraps and veils and guess at the charms that they concealed, and Elizabeth had no taste whatever for adventures. In Geneva, Mr. Gallatin and his son James—a charming boy—took her to suitable lodgings. She was pleased with everything she saw, and quite ready to be amused and entertained. They decided that she was more beautiful than ever. That exquisite colouring, that lovely, heart-shaped little face, that extraordinary dignity and poise, and perfect carriage! They both—though they were not blind to her faults—admired her extremely.

“She ought to have a great success here,” remarked

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James. "I wish she wouldn't kiss me, though. It makes me feel so young."

Thanks to Mr. Gallatin, her first acquaintance in Geneva, her first caller, was Madame de Staël. She came in from Coppet by sleigh—for winter had set in now—and it was a memorable visit. Elizabeth was immensely impressed by that extraordinary personality. Madame de Staël was richly though not fashionably dressed and furred, and her bold, strong features were relieved and made almost handsome by a pair of really remarkable and unforgettable eyes. And what a voice! Was there ever such a voice? Rich, warm, golden. She was the type of woman Elizabeth had always longed to meet, possessing every talent, every charm, every accomplishment. Where Elizabeth admired, she could and did admire whole-heartedly, and she became almost humble in Madame de Staël's presence.

"You must come to Coppet," her visitor said. "The house is full of people—it is nearly always full of people—but you must come, nevertheless, for at least one night. You and I must know each other better. Monsieur Gallatin is one of those rare people to whom one can honestly and confidently say, 'Your friends are mine'."

Mr. Gallatin seemed to enjoy playing the part of the fairy godmother, and he left nothing undone that could be done to make Elizabeth's stay there agreeable.

"You must meet Prince Demidoff," he said. "He also has been asked to Coppet, and he, I am sure, will be delighted to drive you there. James and I will be already staying in the house, or I, of course, would take you myself."

She met Prince Demidoff and made an immediate

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and lasting conquest. He was one of the wealthiest nobles in all Europe, so wealthy that money meant nothing at all to him. He never considered it. He was something of an eccentric, and was living apart from his wife, whom, rumour said, he had treated not too kindly in the days when he had lived in Paris in the Hôtel Praslin. (She was probably a bore, Elizabeth thought.) A fierce anti-Bonapartist, he was immediately interested in Elizabeth's history, having already been captivated, at sight, by her beauty. He had a way of speaking his thoughts aloud at times, which was apt to be disconcerting, and his first words to her were, "So! The American wife of that worthless Jerome! And a great beauty! I am enchanted, madame, to meet you!"

He derived his wealth from an ancestor who had begun life as a blacksmith, and had then built an iron foundry to manufacture weapons for the Tzars. Peter the Great became his friend and protector, ennobled him, and made it possible for him to amass a really great fortune, which his descendants knew how to increase. The present Prince Demidoff, it was said, owned most of the mines in Russia. He was a man of varied interests and with an immense zest for life. He, too, wished to take Elizabeth under his wing—a not altogether nice wing, perhaps, but she knew how to take care of herself. At any rate, it was a golden wing and showered favours on her, and her behaviour was always so correct, so completely beyond criticism, that their friendship never once caused ill-natured talk. "One may associate with men of the most dubious reputations," she once said, "provided that one takes care never, *never* to be alone with them."

On the occasion of the visit to Madame de Staël, they

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were certainly not alone. In a splendid sleigh, harnessed Russian fashion, a large party drove out to Coppet, the luggage following behind.

"The Prince's very rugs are of finest Russian sable," young James had told her, and he spoke the truth. They drove behind eight splendid, lively horses, Elizabeth sitting between Prince Demidoff and His Royal Highness the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin—fortunately it was a very large sleigh—while opposite to them, with their backs to the horses, sat Princess Galitzin and Princess Patiomkin. Elizabeth had to keep telling herself that they were actually on their way to sup and spend the night with the famous Madame de Staël!

"And my father," she thought, "wished me to stay at home and order meals and supervise the staff in South Street! How right I was not to listen to him!"

She decided, driving out to Coppet on that bright winter day, that there were two distinct kinds of happiness; the conscious and the unconscious. To-day she was enjoying a very conscious sort of happiness. "Here am I, little Elizabeth Patterson of Baltimore. . . . Can it really be true? Oh, if the Catons could only see me now! If my father could only see me . . . and William . . . all my friends in America. . . . What would they say?"

This, she thought, was by far the best kind of happiness. One was happy, and one surveyed one's happiness, and was happy again because of it. It doubled one's joy. The other kind one was often only aware of when it was past—and then it was too late. It was a quieter sort; it probably sprang merely from the lack of any particular cause for unhappiness. When un-

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happiness did come, then, and then only, was it thrown into an enviable light.

No, this, this was the better sort! "I am in Prince Demidoff's sleigh—they call him the wealthiest noble in Europe. Beside me sits a Royal Highness, to whom everyone curtsies very low. Opposite me, if you please, are two Princesses with distinguished names (I will find out all about them later). I am as pretty, as well-dressed as either of them. I am enjoying myself. I would like everyone I know to see me."

The years in Baltimore fell away. Only Bo could be remembered with pleasure and satisfaction. "He too must see all this. I will educate him here. Nothing, no one shall prevent it."

Coppet, on a starlight, winter night, with its lights streaming hospitably across the snow, was a delightful and welcome sight! Inside the warm house, sweet with the odours of potpourri, was a still warmer reception; and wit, genius, wisdom, beauty. Reigning over it all, Madame de Staël. Here was a woman who was not merely a wife and mother (though she was both those things, admirably), but a restless, brilliant, powerful intellect as well. And she and Elizabeth were drawn together by an unusual bond, for both shared a common experience; both had incurred the displeasure of Napoleon, one had been rudely banished by him from France, the other he had not admitted.

"You would never have succeeded with him, in any case," said Madame de Staël to her that evening. "He hated women with brains. He mistrusted them."

"But suppose," was Elizabeth's secret thought, "he had found a woman with brains and beauty combined? Oh, why, why did we never meet! "

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Mr. Gallatin was in the best of spirits, and greeted her with affection. His thin, handsome face, with its deeply set eyes and fine, bold nose was sweetened and softened by kindness and benevolence. There were people who said he was a snob, but what of that? No snob was ever kinder, or more catholic in his tastes, and if his circle of friends included the great and the celebrated, that surely, was no sin. His face made one think of the face of an old saint, it was so gently radiant. James, his son, was looking extremely handsome, in a coat the colour of lees of wine, a fashionable shade of the moment. He seemed to find Elizabeth interesting or amusing; at any rate, he was a good deal by her side that evening.

"When you are a little older," she said to him, "I pity the ladies who will lose their hearts to you. You are not like your father. You, I suspect, are full of original sin, and he never was. I am afraid you will amuse yourself far too well."

"Too well," the boy smiled, "for what?"

"For the peace of mind of my sex. It doesn't concern me, of course, for by the time you are old enough to exercise your charms, I shall be far too old to deserve them."

"I don't believe," he said, "that you will change for years and years. Anyway, I hope not, for all our sakes."

"You're a dear, James. I've brought you a little present. It's a brooch Jerome once gave me. Please accept it, I would like you to have it."

She took a small box out of her bag and gave it to him. "Open it, and put it on. It will look well in your choker."

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"How good you are, Madame Bonaparte!" he said, somewhat embarrassed.

"Not at all. I don't like turquoises, they don't suit me. They are more suitable for men, in my opinion. Women should wear brilliants. Wear it and think of me. You and your father are kindness itself. I owe all this to him."

"Do you like it?" he asked.

She looked about her at the pleasant, well-lighted rooms, filled with distinguished people; listened to the many-toned murmur of animated talk, saw Madame de Staël, in her classic white and gold draperies (a style she affected in the evenings), moving from group to group, holding in her hand a little branch of laurel, which she carried as other women carried fans. Her daughter, Albertine, had just been singing, accompanying herself at the spinet, and was now standing talking, a little apart, to her fiancé, the Duc de Broglie. Menservants were passing through the rooms carrying trays of refreshments, and Prince Demidoff, across the room, had just caught her eye, bowed, and raised a glass to his lips.

"Of course I like it," she said. "Don't you?"

He hesitated.

"Yes . . . I think so. . . . Madame de Staël rather frightens me. So do a good many of these ladies. But I keep my eyes on father and try to do what he does."

She laughed. "You can't go wrong if you do that. Now tell me who some of these people are. That charming girl who has just been singing is Albertine de Staël, I know, and that is her fiancé, De Broglie. Over there, talking to a very stout lady with a very low bodice—oh, dear, what a low-cut bodice!—is Madame's

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son, Auguste. And with them, I think, is Benjamin Constant. Am I right? So far so good. But that is all I know. Fill in the gaps for me."

"I will as far as I can," he said. "That dark man talking to Madame de Staël now—the one on the left—is Monsieur Sismondi, the historian. Father says he is an important historian. On the other side of her is Monsieur de Bonstettin. I know very little about him; I think he writes books about Switzerland, but I have never read them. Father could tell you. Opposite us, directly opposite, in yellow, with yellow feathers in her hair, is the Duchess of Duras. I know an amusing story concerning her, which I will tell you, if you like. The Duke is leaning against the mantelpiece, talking to father. The Duke and Duchess of Clermont-Tonnerre are both talking to His Royal Highness, and so is Princess Galitzin. But you know her, because you drove out with her from Geneva."

"Thank you," said Elizabeth. "You've told me all I want to know. And now tell me your story, if it's fit for my middle-aged ears."

"Oh, it isn't that sort of story at all," the boy said. "I never tell that sort to ladies, and very seldom to gentlemen, for somehow I haven't the knack. This one is quite a proper one. The Duchess once asked Montrond what animal most resembled man, and his reply was, '*Les Anglais, Duchesse.*' Do you think that funny? I do. I laugh whenever I think of it."

"It's the sort of thing," said Elizabeth, "that one would love to have said oneself. Tell me what you did last night. Was it an amusing evening?"

James said that Madame de Staël had read to them, and it had bored him just a little. "Then father," he

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said, "told us about his first meeting with General Washington. Later I danced a minuet with Albertine, not very well, I'm afraid. That was all. I see that I shan't get into any mischief here."

"I should hope not. You're far too young."

"I'm keeping a diary," he said. "Don't you think I'm right to do so? If I go with father on all these journeys of his, I shall have plenty to put into it."

"Promise," she said, with her quick, brilliant little smile, "to put me into it."

He nodded. "I promise. This very night."

Presently she joined a little group consisting of Prince Demidoff and the Duke and Duchess of Clermont-Tonnerre. The Duchess asked her a great many questions about America. Was it safe to go there? Was there a danger of being scalped? Did one always have to go armed? "I am sure I should not like the wilderness," said the Duchess. "It is not the sort of thing I enjoy at all. Not at all."

"I can assure you," said Elizabeth, smiling, "that the parts of America where you would be likely to go are a great deal safer than Paris. Our cities are not beautiful, but they are quite sufficiently civilized. There are dressmakers in New York very nearly as good, I believe, as Leroy, in Paris, though I have not yet had the pleasure of buying a dress from Leroy."

The Duchess was now on familiar ground. "Ah, Leroy! There is no one like him. He will be the ruin of us all. By the way, I will tell you something. That lovely Pole, Madame Walewska, who is supposed to be so devoted to Napoleon—yes, she has been to Elba to visit him for a few days; that is quite true and has been stated on the best authority—Madame Walewska

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spends not only most of her time, but hundreds of thousands of francs in the Rue Richelieu. That is the address of Leroy, madame. Yes, she is the most extravagant, the most madly extravagant of women. And believe me, she is not in mourning for her lover's exile. Not at all. No, indeed! Her gowns are of every colour, each one more beautiful than the last. She has ordered six gowns in *gros de Naples* alone, so Leroy told me. Astonishing, is it not, Demidoff, when she is supposed to be broken-hearted? "

"Very few beautiful women," said the Russian, "are so broken-hearted as to disregard their appearance. At least, I have never known of such a case."

"But Walewska . . . one believed that there, at least, was truly a grand passion. Well, it appears it was not. It is very disappointing. What is going to happen now? Someone is to act a comedy for us, is it not so? You, Madame Bonaparte, do you act? "

Elizabeth shook her head.

"Never; I have no talents."

"Only the talent," Demidoff said, in a low voice, drawing her away, "of being the most sensible as well as the most beautiful woman in the room." And he found two chairs from which they had a good view of the improvised stage.

"Tell me," Elizabeth asked him, "why does Madame de Staël carry that little branch of laurel in her hand? Is it just for to-night, for the play, perhaps, or does she always do it? "

"On such evenings as this, always," said Demidoff. "It is an affectation, of course, but her affectations are at least those of a woman of refinement and taste. Without them, she would not be Madame de Staël. At

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the end of the evening, you will see, she will toss it to someone to whom she wishes to pay a special compliment. Oh, yes, we have all received them at different times. Laurel from 'Corinne'; it is something to keep. But she is not well. See those dark lines under her eyes. She has far too many troubles. She is very much worried now about her husband, poor Rocca. He is ill here. . . ." He touched his chest. "Such women should not marry. No one expects them to live always alone, but why must they take husbands? It is folly. I advise you, madame, not to follow her example."

"I am not a De Staël," Elizabeth said. "Conduct that would be condoned in a woman of genius would not be forgiven in me."

"You are a woman with personality, brains, beauty. That is genius enough. You see I am your partisan, I defend you even against yourself. Do not marry, I implore you."

"I would expect too much of a husband," Elizabeth said, "but of a lover, I would expect even more. I am better as I am."

Presently the comedy began, Madame de Staël playing the leading part. It had been written for the occasion, Elizabeth heard, by M. Constant. It was an amusing trifle, and an hour passed most pleasantly. When it was over, and in the midst of the applause the little laurel branch was tossed to Mr. Gallatin, whose delightful face showed that though he was pleased, he was even more embarrassed. He went forward, bowed, and kissed Madame de Staël's hand amidst more applause. Then everyone began to talk again, and to move about, and the servants brought in more refreshments. The house, Elizabeth thought, was run like an

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excellent hotel. Madame de Stael must still be immensely rich, even though she talked a good deal about her financial worries. Elizabeth knew that she was the daughter of Baron Necker, the wealthy financier, and that Coppet had once been his, and she envied her her freedom and her power.

"I cannot imagine a more perfect existence," she said to Mr. Gallatin later, "than to live like this, surrounded by delightful friends and without any real financial cares. Here, it seems to me, is the very flower of our civilization. I really don't see how it could be improved upon."

Mr. Gallatin agreed with her. "Changes will come," he said, "vast changes, though it is difficult to see in what direction. But this, as you say, is surely what human life was meant to be; gracious, polished, humane, philosophical. I, too, doubt if it could be improved upon."

"I cannot thank you enough," she said, "for having introduced me. I feel at peace and at home here. I think I would like this visit to last for ever."

"Instead of ending," he said, "to-morrow morning. It is far too quickly over. I hope arrangements have been made for your return to Geneva. How do you go?"

Elizabeth said she was returning as she had come, with Prince Demidoff. "Whom I find," she added, "vastly kind and delightful. We are already excellent friends."

"He is a person to know," said Mr. Gallatin. "A curious and interesting product of a curious race. I find that most of the Russians I meet are without large ideals—you will know what I mean. They think wholly in

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terms of themselves and their own concerns; certainly they never look beyond the boundaries of their own country. But that is a fairly common failing in the world to-day. Only in America, England, Switzerland and perhaps in France can one speak of the good of mankind and be listened to and understood."

"Would you include America?" Elizabeth asked, surprised.

"Certainly. Most of all America. It is in the air there. Liberal ideas are so taken for granted that they are hardly topics for discussion. And of course we are not good talkers. We are impatient of talk. There has been no time; there has been too much to do. Here, talk is loved, worshipped for its own sake."

"Perhaps," she said, "that is what I miss so in America. There is no conversation. Gossip, chatter, yes, but no exchange of ideas."

"Be patient," he said. "America is young, but it is the hope of the world."

Madame de Stael, who was one of those hostesses who like to keep everyone in motion, swept down upon Elizabeth, bringing with her M. Sismondi.

"Here is a new friend," she said, taking Elizabeth's hand. "My new and charming friend, Madame Bonaparte. So much beauty and spirit and elegance will be a great addition to our evenings here. I wish her to be loved and valued by all whom I love and value, and you, Sismondi, are one of them. So pray make her acquaintance at once if you wish to please me."

These introductions might have been somewhat embarrassing if they had been made by anyone but Madame de Staël, but she was so obviously sincere her-

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self, so urgent, and her personality so pervaded everything she did and said, that shyness or awkwardness could not exist in her presence. She swept them away, banished them completely.

Under such kind auspices, sponsored so warmly and generously, Elizabeth felt that her future in Europe was more or less assured. It only remained for her to consolidate her victories. She glowed and expanded under the welcome she was receiving. She was accepted by this brilliant assembly—only the Duchess of Clermont-Tonnerre had seemed to her a little stupid—as one of themselves, while in Baltimore she had been treated either like some strange, outlandish being, to be peered at and whispered about, or remembered as “Little Betsy Patterson”, and treated with no more respect than any other young woman. (She must write to her father at once and tell him of these successes.) And wherever she turned, Prince Demidoff was at her elbow. It was flattering, but she would have to be careful. He was only forty-one, and a man of many experiences, amorous and otherwise.

He told her that evening that he had raised and commanded his own regiment to fight against Napoleon.

“You will find no Bonapartists here,” he said. “I suspect there is not a soul in this house who would not say, ‘He is better in Elba than in Europe, but he would be better dead than in Elba.’”

And he told her that Joseph Bonaparte, the eldest brother, lived at Prangins, not far away. “Perhaps you will meet him,” he said. “He manages to live in great style there, as though he fancied himself still the King of Spain.”

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"I hardly think he will care to meet me," said Elizabeth.

"Why not? You are beautiful, and like all the Bonapartes, he adores female beauty. Mr. Gallatin knows him; I am sure he would take you."

She shook her head.

"Some day, perhaps. Not now. Wait until I know my Europe better. I have too much to learn."

Madame de Stael had received a letter from the Duke of Wellington, who was in Vienna, at the Congress there. She read extracts from it to the company.

"There," she said, to Elizabeth, "is the saviour of Europe, the grandest, the most admirable of men. He does not pursue fame and glory, like Napoleon. They are, to him, a mere by-product of living and of performing his duty. That is the difference between a great man and a charlatan."

"Then introduce us, please!" cried Elizabeth. "I long to meet such a paragon."

"When the Congress is over, and we are all in Paris again, you shall meet him. I foresee that you will make a conquest."

Driving back to Geneva the next day, Elizabeth again sat beside Demidoff in the sleigh. Bells jingled, whips cracked, snowflakes came whirling down, the pines looked black under their burdens of snow, and the grey sky made the whole scene grander, wilder than it had seemed when the sun shone on it. The roads were steep and sometimes dangerous. Under the sable robes, Demidoff found her hand and pressed it, at the same time moving closer to her. She turned to him with her quick little smile and said, gently drawing away her hand:

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"I am crowding you. Pray let me sit in one of the other sleighs, so that you will have more room."

He protested, at once, that the other sleighs were still more crowded and that he had ample room, but that if she found it cramped, he himself would take the reins and send the driver elsewhere.

"For I would not permit you to have a moment's discomfort," he said, "if I could help it. But tell me that you are happy; that you are enjoying yourself. For me, it is an enchantment."

"I am quite happy *now*," she said. And he did not try again to take her hand.

She had many callers these days. M. Bonstettin, M. Sismondi, the Prince, Mr. Gallatin and James all took care that she should not be lonely. The Prince gave large dinner parties, and placed her on his right hand. Geneva was full of interesting people, many of whom, like Madame de Staël, were once exiles from France. They talked of returning there in the spring, and Elizabeth, too, planned to spend the spring in Paris. She would have plenty of friends there now (the Gallatins were also going), and, what was most important to her, the right sort of friends. Indeed, someone returning from Paris had told her that her presence in Europe was not only already known but had aroused considerable interest at the Court of Louis XVIII, a piece of news Elizabeth received with surprise and gratification.

Demidoff had decided not to go to Paris. He no longer liked Paris, he said; it had changed too much. He would go instead to Florence, where he had a palazzo, for Florence in the spring was very nearly heaven on earth. He tried to persuade her to come too, but she had made up her mind to go to Paris, and

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besides, it was becoming a little difficult, now, to keep Demidoff at arm's length. He was certainly very much in love.

"But I would never marry a Russian," she told Mr. Gallatin, "and although Demidoff may be a good name, I prefer Bonaparte. All the same, the Prince and I are excellent friends, and I hope will remain so."

For Demidoff, in spite of his remarks about matrimony, had begun to speak to her of marriage. There were difficulties in the way, it seemed, but these could be overcome. She would not let him continue. He had already tried to make love to her, and she had shown him that she was not the sort of woman to consider an irregular attachment. Now, when he spoke of marriage, she was equally firm.

"You and I, Demidoff, are sensible people, not sentimentalists. We will not spoil a charming and interesting friendship by committing either of these follies. Believe me, I mean what I say. I am much attached to you, but only as a friend. If that is not sufficient, let us say good-bye."

So he assumed the rôle of a hopeless but resigned lover, satisfied if she would dine often at his house, receive little gifts from him—for she would accept nothing of value—and allow herself to be driven into the country (though never alone) in his sleighs. Often he drove himself, and his handling of the horses was perfection. It was, in fact, his proud boast that he had for years been considered the finest whip in Paris. She was often reminded of those drives with Jerome in Baltimore, in the sleigh made in the shape of a lion, and could smile now, a little contemptuously, at the

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recollection, and tell herself that the best that could be said of those drives was that they had led to these.

Half promising to come later to Florence, she bade him good-bye at the end of February, and followed the Gallatins to Paris. She took lodgings in a house in the Faubourg that the Gallatins had recommended, and her first visitor was young James, who had come to see if she were comfortably installed. She had a bedroom and sitting-room on the second floor, and had lost no time in unpacking all her belongings, so that the place already had a quite home-like appearance. She possessed several handsome cashmere shawls, and these, draped over an ugly sofa to hide its stained satin, or flung over a shabby spinet, seemed to help to furnish the room.

"It is wonderful to be in Paris," she said. "I was here, of course, on my way to Geneva, but I was alone, except for some American acquaintances whom I did not care for. Now things will be quite different. I am looking forward to it all more than I can say. Tell me your news. I hear you've already been received at the Palace."

"There is more interesting news than that," said the young man, with a sudden burst of laughter.

"James! You haven't fallen in love!"

"No, not yet. Something even more interesting still. We met Monsieur David the other night, and he asked me to pose for him. And how, do you think? As Cupid! And quite naked! And what is more, father said I might. Now, isn't that amusing?"

Elizabeth had often teased him about his beauty, and Madame de Staël had nicknamed him "*Cupidon*" This, she now said, proved that they were right. He

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was as pretty as any girl. He assured her that he thought that no compliment.

"But David! Think of it! It will be a famous picture. You must arrange for me to meet him."

He brought messages from his father, stayed to examine some souvenirs that she had brought from Geneva, and then said good-bye. "I will come soon again," he said, "and remember, father expects you to dine with us on Wednesday."

He came again sooner than either of them expected, and this time his father came with him. It was the next afternoon, about five o'clock, and Elizabeth had just come in from a shopping excursion. Their faces told her at once that something extremely important had happened. James was bursting with excitement, his eyes wide and shining, but out of respect for his father he managed to control himself, and let him tell the news they had come to bring her.

"My dear Madame Bonaparte," said Mr. Gallatin, a hand pressed to his side and breathing a little quickly, for he had hurried up the stairs, "we can only stay a moment. There is very grave news—very grave—and I am on my way to the Palace. Napoleon has escaped from Elba and has landed in France, somewhere on the Mediterranean coast, and is said to be coming straight to Paris. Only a few people have heard the news as yet, but by to-morrow it will be pretty generally known. What will you do? I hardly think it advisable for you to remain here."

Startling though this news was, and of immeasurable importance, Elizabeth's thoughts flew, first of all, to Bo, at school in Emmitsburg. How would it affect him? How would it alter his fortunes? Would the

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Bonapartes contrive once more to establish themselves in Europe? If so, this might be the most significant day in Bo's whole life. Then, recalling herself to the immediate present, she realized that Mr. Gallatin was right, and that it would be unwise for her to stay longer in Paris.

"But this is amazing!" she cried. "Amazing." And she added, with a quick little smile, "*What a man!* I felt sure that we hadn't heard the last of him. '*Il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas.*' But has he an army? What do you think he will do? What can he do?"

"It's impossible to say," said Mr. Gallatin. "There may be fighting and bloodshed. I don't want to frighten you, dearest lady, but you bear the name of Bonaparte, and you are alone here. I think that undoubtedly you would run a risk by remaining. If I were you, I would go to England, and at once, before the rush begins, for as soon as they hear the news, all the English in Paris will be hurrying home."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "it seems to be my fate to be driven from France! I only arrived two days ago, and am hardly recovered yet from the journey. But I am sure you are right. Where shall I go? Advise me. I have no acquaintance in London."

Mr. Gallatin suggested Cheltenham.

"A charming little watering-place, full of life and fashion. I have friends there at this moment, and will be only too happy to give you letters to them."

Was there no hope, she asked, that he and James might be able to come too? But Mr. Gallatin said that he was America's unofficial representative in Paris, and must stay for the present, and watch events.

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"You will have plenty to put into your diary now," she said to James. "What times we live in! What incredible times!"

They saw to her passport, procured a seat for her on an early coach, leaving Paris at half-past eight, and the next morning James came to see her off, bearing with him several letters for her to people in Cheltenham. When she read the inscriptions, her mood brightened considerably. Sir Arthur and Lady Brooke Falkener . . . Lady Condague . . . General Trivin. . . Things might not turn out so badly after all, and the presence of a Madame Bonaparte in England at the very moment of the return of the exiled Emperor should arouse considerable attention. Mr. Gallatin was the kindest of friends, and James a dear boy. He had gone to endless trouble for her, and appeared not to mind it in the least. Really, if Bo should some day take James Gallatin for a pattern and example, he would do well enough.

She was in her seat nearly an hour before the coach was ready to start, which was fortunate, for there were people so eager to get away that they were willing to offer almost any sum for accommodation. As the great, heavily laden diligence with its four horses rattled through Paris, she observed the people in the streets with keen interest. Everyone knew, now, that was obvious. The whole aspect of the streets had changed. She thought that on many of the women's faces was a look of anxiety, a harassed, apprehensive, often bewildered look, while most of the men seemed angry and perturbed. Little groups stood on street corners, talking, arguing excitedly, the working-women with their skirts tucked up about their knees. If anyone felt joy or elation, no one showed it that day. Contrary

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to her usual custom, she talked to the people in the coach, two Englishmen hurrying back to England with their families. The general opinion seemed to be that Napoleon would never reach Lyons. The King, said one, had already declared him a traitor and an outlaw, and had ordered his capture, at whatever cost. As their luggage was being examined at the gates of Paris, an expansive though fierce-looking official assured them that he had been informed, on the best authority, that Monsieur, the King's brother, the Duke of Orleans, and Marshal Macdonald, had all hurried off to fortify the garrison at Lyons and that if this were so, Napoleon would certainly be captured there. "He will be in Paris, as a prisoner, before the end of the week," he said with confidence, "probably in a cage." But another scoffed at this. Napoleon was far too clever. He wouldn't try to come to Paris at all, but meant, most likely, only to go through Piedmont into Italy, where he would join his brother-in-law, Joachim Murat, King of Naples.

Elizabeth presently decided not to listen to any more talk. It was too confusing, and really no one knew any more about it than she did. Her own unexpressed opinion was that the enterprise, if he really meant to march on Paris and try to reinstate himself, was dubious and unlikely to succeed, at any rate, for long. She believed that much of the enchantment he had possessed for the people had fled; some magic that had been his had been dissipated by defeat and exile. And England, as one of her fellow-travellers frequently and boastfully declared, would undoubtedly fight to the last man and the last golden sovereign rather than see him supreme again in Europe. Then of what use to return, only to

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plunge the country once more in blood? Surely it was ill-advised, ill-conceived . . . and yet, and yet, what indomitable courage!

"Courage, yes," she thought, as they rattled along the endless, poplar-lined roads towards Calais, "but there are times when courage is only fool-hardiness, when it is wiser, greater, to accept defeat. If only he had had a different sort of wife, he might not have made the mistakes he has made, and then he would have been the greatest conqueror of all times. Josephine had no real influence over him. From Jerome's description of her, I always felt that she was a woman with plenty of good impulses, plenty of emotions and sensibilities but lacking in real intelligence. A delightful mistress, but, for such a man, a poor wife. He needed someone more like his mother, but with the social sense that she lacks. As for Marie Louise, that was one of his worst mistakes. She seems to me to be no more than a selfish little fool. From her pictures I don't even consider her pretty. A woman with a really good, practical mind might have made all the difference—and not only a practical mind, combined, of course, with plenty of courage and determination, but with charm and beauty as well. What a pity it is, that . . . well, well, it is useless to think of that. On the events of the next few weeks hang all Bo's future. I doubt if many people will be watching them with more interest than I will—or with more at stake."

None of her travelling companions were people she particularly wished to see again, and although they were kind to her, offered her every assistance, and always invited her to join them at meal-times, she parted from them at the end of the journey without

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regret. Once more—it was only for a night or two—she put up at the City of London Inn where she had stayed ten years earlier. London was cold and rainy, and if people were excited and alarmed over Napoleon's return, there was little sign of it in the streets. But there was nothing to tempt her to remain there, so, two days later, rested and refreshed, she took the coach to Cheltenham, sleeping at Oxford, and went to the lodgings that had been recommended to her in London.

Her arrival caused, as she had guessed it would, a considerable flutter. For no matter what Jerome had chosen to do since, she was still the mother of his son, and of Napoleon's nephew. Moreover, she was beautiful, dignified and charming, and—a circumstance that went at once to the hearts of her new friends—alone.

So beautiful, so unfortunate, and yet alone! They rushed to make her acquaintance. Sir Arthur and Lady Brooke Falkener left cards at once at her lodgings, and, when they had met her, could not show her enough attention.

"My dear," said Lady Brooke Falkener, as their friendship grew, "I don't know how it is in America, but here in England people of fashion do not live in 'boarding-houses'. There is a furnished house next door to ours, and connected with ours, and you must take it. No, no, it will be no trouble. Leave the engaging of the servants to me . . . nothing could be easier."

"But I cannot afford it," cried Elizabeth. "I am not rich, believe me. I must take the greatest care not to live beyond my means."

But Lady Brooke Falkener would not listen to her protests. "It is absolutely necessary," she insisted, "that you have a *house*. We will contrive to get it for

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you on the best possible terms. It will cost you very little, for of course you will seldom, if ever, dine at home. Cheltenham society will see to that."

Cheltenham society indeed saw to that. Most of her meals were soon taken at the houses of her friends. She had a light breakfast in her bedroom—it was the first time in her life that she had been mistress of her own establishment, and she took great pleasure in her freedom—and after making a careful toilet, she would walk to the Pump Room and take the waters—a guinea for a course—then, in company with the rest of fashionable Cheltenham, she strolled in the pretty, well-laid-out walks about Montpelier Fields, where she saw everyone of interest and heard the latest news. After that, it soon became her habit to spend half an hour or so at Williams' Library, reading the English and foreign papers. In the afternoon there were drives to be taken into the country; picnics; walks, and sometimes climbs up Cleve Cloud Hill—but Elizabeth did not care for either walking or climbing; race meetings or concerts, if one did not wish to go far afield. Almost every evening she dined out, and after dinner went to a ball or rout. The little town itself was a cheerful, bustling place, with coaches and four-in-hands clattering through the High Street all day, and families setting out on excursions with children, nurses and picnic baskets. At first Elizabeth amused herself by experimenting with the different baths—"I have tried them all," she wrote to Edward in jocular mood, "except the Sulphur Fumigating Bath and the Whooptong Paste Bath, though I may one day try the latter from sheer curiosity." But she found the vapour baths too weakening and gave them up after a severe fainting attack.

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"My health is suffering a decline," she told Lady Brooke Falkener. "I put it down to worry and misfortune. Peace of mind and relief from financial anxieties would make an enormous difference to me, but my father, although he is a very wealthy man indeed, disapproves of my leaving home and will do nothing for me. This, of course," she added, "is entirely between ourselves."

Nevertheless, she greatly enjoyed the Cotswold mutton, the fine salmon from the Severn, and the good Gloucestershire bacon. English cooking, she declared, had been shockingly maligned.

Meanwhile "Bony", as everyone called him, had marched triumphantly on Paris, the King had fled, and in England, consols suffered a sharp decline. Everyone began to be seriously worried. Mr. Gallatin and James had followed Elizabeth to England—but not until Mr. Gallatin had actually obtained an interview with Napoleon at the Élysée Palace, an interview which he later described to her in great detail. Affairs kept him in London for the present, and he wrote that in military circles it was considered that war was inevitable. James wrote that he had met the Prince Regent, who pinched his cheek and prophesied for him great success with the ladies.

In spite of a subdued air of excitement, nervousness and tension, the days in Cheltenham passed quietly enough, though in London, from all accounts, there was a mounting sense of alarm. The war, if indeed it came, would be far away from these idle, chattering, agreeable, privileged folk. Their interests were nearer home, and surely, no matter how a war on the Continent went, nothing too unpleasant would reach them. They con-

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tinued, therefore, to concern themselves chiefly with matters of the moment (not forgetting to keep an anxious eye on their investments). Would darling Fanny have a success at Lady Condague's ball, and so requite her parents for all the expenses they had been put to? Would Lady B—— succeed after all in charming the rich old Lord D—— into a proposal? Would a war, if it came, interfere with the London season? An important consideration for mothers who had daughters to bring out. Elizabeth made some conquests, behaved, as always, with the most perfect discretion, and wrote letters home complaining of her poor health, but jubilant over her successes. It was not always easy to strike the right note. She was not well, but she had dragged herself to balls for three nights in succession; her presence was expected. She was attracting the notice of all the nobility and fashion, but her lack of wealth made it difficult for her to accept their hospitality, which she knew she could never return. Moreover, a woman alone must be so prudent, so cautious that she must be for ever thinking of appearances, and so may miss many pleasures that might otherwise be hers. Her lot was not an easy one; yet she had never been so happy, never so well attended to by persons whose notice was in itself the most pleasing kind of flattery.

Even Mr. King, the Master of Ceremonies that year, made her enjoyment his especial care. He was for ever suggesting pleasant trips, bringing about desirable meetings and introductions, and singing the praises of the beautiful Madame Bonaparte. And it was not at all necessary to go to London to buy clothes, for London fashions now came to Cheltenham, and one could dress

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there as well, almost, as in Paris. One night she was introduced to the Prince Regent, and made her bow. He did not fail to notice her. Mrs. Fitzherbert came to take the cure, but Elizabeth did not meet her, nor did she wish to do so. She had still the prejudices of the virtuous American. She looked on at the behaviour of some of the ladies of fashion with a contemptuous little smile. In the *beau monde* such things were permitted, of course, but she held in poor esteem those women who indulged in illicit love affairs. She was not at all shocked, she was only faintly disgusted (though none the less interested). Her own friends, her intimates, were never of that type.

She talked a great deal to Sir Arthur and Lady Brooke Falkener, to Lady Condague and Lord Strangford about Bo. Bo, she told them, was an exceedingly promising boy, far above the average in both charm and intellect.

"You may think that this is merely a mother's prejudice," she said to Lord Strangford, "but believe me, it is not so. I am not a sentimental parent, nor a blind one. I can see that Bo has a quick mind and a charming nature, and that he will make his way in the world, if given a chance. I want him to have that chance."

"You must bring him to Europe," Lord Strangford advised her. "An American education may be well enough; I know nothing of it; but if he is to have a career in Europe, he should be educated here. Send him to Eton."

"Ah!" she said, "that, alas! I could never afford. You see, I am not a rich woman. I must try to hit upon some kind of education which will give him what

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he needs, but which won't be too great a drain upon my purse. For even if Napoleon were to succeed in establishing himself again in France, which we all think unlikely, I doubt if my pension would be restored to me. And I have nothing at all of my own except what I have saved, each year, and invested. I foresaw the day," she added with a smile, "when it would come to an end."

"Very few women are so wise or so prudent," said Lord Strangford admiringly, and he thought a little sadly of certain female members of his own family who knew almost nothing of the sources of their incomes, even less about how to take care of them, and nothing at all about spending them.

"A devilish clever woman, Madame Bonaparte," he told a friend. "She'll have plenty of offers here, I'll be bound. One can talk to her almost as one would talk to a man, and at the same time have the pleasure of looking upon an extremely beautiful face."

The spring came on, and the spring was not unkind that year. The news from the Continent was of a most conflicting nature, and no one quite knew what to believe. The ceremony of the Champs de Mars was highly impressive and alarming (it had ended in a thunderstorm) with its solemn Mass, its military display and show of eagles, and the opportunity it gave for a great gathering of all the Bonapartes and their supporters. Elizabeth smiled when she heard that Jerome was there, dressed in white velvet worked in gold, a short velvet cape embroidered in golden bees, and a cap from which sprouted the most splendid of white ostrich plumes. She had disassociated herself from Jerome completely now, though not from the Bonapartes as

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a whole. Everything that concerned that family, concerned her—and Bo. But for Jerome she felt only contempt. With what joy and rapture, she thought, must he have ordered that costume, tried it on, and worn it when the great day came! But now, what next? The Duke of Wellington was in Belgium, with the troops, studying the ground, and the Emperor, it appeared, was still in Paris, though there were movements of troops towards the north. The Duke of Richmond and his family were in Brussels, and there was talk about a ball that he was to give on the 16th of June. Elizabeth, hearing about it from some acquaintance, thought how much she would like to be there, for then, perhaps, she might meet the Duke of Wellington. Since hearing so much of him in Geneva, she often thought of him. There, Madame de Staël had said, was a man who possessed Napoleon's genius and only lacked his faults. But Madame de Stael, Elizabeth reminded herself, was prejudiced.

It was unfortunate, perhaps, to be in Cheltenham now, so far from sources of information. Sir Arthur and Lady Brooke Falkener presently grew restless and impatient, and decided to cut short their drinking of the waters and hurry to London. Although she was feeling far from well at the time, Elizabeth agreed to go with them, and they travelled to London together. But in London there was nothing conclusive to be known, and after a short stay, Elizabeth made up her mind that she was better in Cheltenham. She stayed, however, until an evening reception, for which Lady Brooke Falkener had sent out cards, had taken place. And it was well that she did, for it was there that she met two people who were destined to play an important

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part in her life. They were Lady Morgan, who wrote books under her maiden name of Sidney Owenson, and her husband, Sir Charles Morgan, a retired physician. Elizabeth, though she took care not to admit it, had never heard of this lady before, but she contrived before meeting her again to read nearly everything she had written, including *The Wild Irish Girl*, which she sincerely admired. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship.

Lady Morgan was a quick-witted, social, lovable creature who had a tremendous flair for drawing-room success, and was so popular that no one who knew her could fail to wonder when she found time to put pen to paper. She dressed fussily and badly and was not devoid of affectations, but she had so shrewd a mind, so warm a heart, so lively an intelligence that she won Elizabeth's admiration and friendship almost from the first moment of their meeting.

It was, happily, reciprocal, for to Lady Morgan Elizabeth was a most interesting and romantic figure, and she was pleased and flattered by her admiration. By some curious human alchemy, they charmed and mentally stimulated each other, and never from the first moment was there a hint of rivalry, of pettiness or even of selfishness in their mutual regard. As for Sir Charles, Elizabeth thought him as nearly perfect as it was possible for a husband to be.

When she returned to Cheltenham—an attack of "internal inflammation" hastened her departure—she and Lady Morgan wrote to each other frequently. Lady Morgan's letters were amusing, full of gossip and observation, and often witty, and Elizabeth sometimes read them aloud to a Scotch friend of hers, a certain

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Miss Clagston with whom she had become friendly. She and Miss Clagston took the waters and promenaded together daily, but although she liked her and was grateful for her company when she was feeling too unwell to go about much in society, her feeling for Lady Morgan eclipsed any liking she had ever felt for a member of her own sex.

Robert wrote, at about this time, that Mary Caton had at last agreed to an engagement, and that they hoped to be married quite early in the autumn. "We hope you will be here," Robert said. "Is there any likelihood that you may be?" Elizabeth thought it highly improbable, but she was pleased and surprised when he said that they hoped to come to Europe for their honeymoon (perhaps bringing Louisa and Elizabeth with them), for it was Mary's wish, above everything, to go abroad.

"I suppose," thought Elizabeth, "she is a trifle jealous of my success here and hopes to be able to share in it a little. Well, I dare say I could make their stay more agreeable than it would otherwise be."

Then after a few days of really horrid tension and gloom—for Napoleon was on the march with an army of veterans—came bad news. A great battle, it was said, had been fought, and the Duke of Wellington crushed. No one could quite credit anything so dreadful, so catastrophic, but *supposing it were true?* The suspense was terrible, the waiting almost unbearable.

The house of Rothschild had placed mounted couriers on fast horses all the way from Brussels to Ostend, and at Ostend a fast clipper was kept ready to sail for England with the first decisive news. All this James Gallatin heard, and wrote in a letter to Elizabeth, send-

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ing her messages from his father, who was at the moment too occupied to write himself.

There were battles fought on the 16th and the 17th, but with what results? Only the most confusing reports reached them. Elizabeth, feeling extremely restless, was in and out of the Pump Room all day. Once again, she hardly knew what her own feelings were. She believed that Napoleon's overthrow was necessary for the peace of the world; her great dread was that England might be defeated; and yet, with Napoleon's downfall would go so many of her own hopes. Some of her friends would scarcely let her out of their sight. It was so interesting, they felt, to have "Bony's" sister-in-law actually near at hand while the great battle that might end all battles was being fought out.

On the 22nd the news came to Cheltenham. All the way through England the victory of Waterloo set villages aflame with enthusiasm. Cheltenham immediately caught the fever, and the whole town turned out, people shouting, cheering, shaking one another's hands, even kissing one another in their excitement and joy. Elizabeth, with her friend, Miss Clagston, walked to the Pump Room in the afternoon, and there listened to the reports that rapidly followed one another. The Duke had done it! He had done it! It was the greatest battle ever fought. Napoleon would never raise his head again.

It had been, it appeared, a near thing! But for a few errors on the French side, and the immense, incalculable personal influence of the Duke—under whom men were in the habit of doing just a little more than they could—all might have been lost. So Lord Strangford

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told them, a day or two later, when details had begun to filter through.

That night there were bonfires on the hills about Cheltenham, and there was so much merry-making and rejoicing that Elizabeth wondered where could be the friends and loved ones of those thousands of slain. Did no one think of them? After a victory, there seem few mourners; the dead are counted more carefully after a defeat. War continued to seem to her a mad, illogical business, though few questioned its necessity.

What would happen now? Would the King return? Would Napoleon abdicate? The excitement was intense. But a little over a week later the allied troops were at the gates of Paris, and Napoleon was waiting for the end at Malmaison. "France," proclaimed Wellington, "has no enemies that I know of. We are the enemies of a single man and his adherents. The situation in which we find ourselves could not be called a state of war against France, but a war on the part of all Europe, including France, against Bonaparte, and against his army. . . ."

The Duke was now the most important figure in Europe.

"I am destined never to meet Napoleon," said Elizabeth, "but the Duke of Wellington I must and shall meet. I am determined to go to Paris as soon as ever the peace terms have been settled! "

When she heard that Napoleon had abdicated in favour of his son, she wondered, for a little while, if Bo, at school in Emmitsburg, was to have a cousin on the throne of France; but she was not long in doubt. The Duke was determined on the Bourbons, and by the end of July the great drama was over, and Napoleon

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was at last to reach the English coast, but as a prisoner, touching at Plymouth for a few days on his way to St. Helena. Was this, then, the end of all the Bonapartes? Was there to be nothing left but the glamour and glory of the name? Then that name was something to hold fast to. This conviction made it easier for her to say to a vastly wealthy merchant named Wilkins, a widower with three young daughters:

"If I ever exchange the name of Bonaparte for another, it must be a name that can hold its own beside it. I have few possessions, but that one makes up to me for the lack of wealth and even health. I appreciate the honour you have done me, but I must regretfully decline it."

Wealth could be bought too dear. How her friends in America would have smiled to hear that she had decided to become Mrs. Wilkins or Mrs. Blore—another admirer—or even Lady Gollen! No, no, no.

In August she wrote to her father:

DEAR SIR,

I have been obliged to remain here owing to indisposition, but shall proceed to Paris when my health will permit me to travel. I have been agreeably surprised at the kind and flattering reception which I have received from the most fashionable and elevated ranks in society in this country—nor is there anything left for me to desire except the presence of my American friends to witness the estimation in which I have the happiness to be held. The political state of Europe is still fluctuating. France is a volcano from which occasionally are emitted sparks of fire which threaten alike all

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parties. Louis XVIII remains at Paris, protected by the combined forces of Europe. Napoleon is gone to St. Helena, but has left behind him a reputation which adversity has not subverted.

Everyone wishes me to educate my child in England, and they are good enough to flatter him by saying that Bonaparte talents ought to have English education. He would indeed be much more highly considered in Europe than in America, where unfortunately he possesses no rank; and could I combine with the interest he excites here the solid advantage of a large fortune, I should be too happy! As a last resort, he must be a professional character, and the talent with which nature has so lavishly endowed him might lead him to the highest eminence in Europe. . . . Splendid intellectual endowments may be a misery or a blessing to their possessor, and everything depends on the method of directing them in early age. My conduct in leaving America [Mr. Patterson was still unreconciled] was the result of much previous reflection, nor do I see any reason yet to regret it; on the contrary, my most sanguine expectations have been exceeded.

With love to the family, I remain, sir, respectfully and affectionately,

E. PATTERSON.

She wished, by means of her letters, to impress her father, and, through her father, her family and friends, with her success—which was indeed gratifying enough—but as far as her father was concerned she shot very wide of her mark. That stout republican grew only

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more and more disgusted and disapproving. Lord This, Lady That, did Betsy think he was a fool to be impressed with titles? What did these people want of his daughter? Because she had the misfortune to be the discarded wife of a Bonaparte, they made much of her for their own entertainment, or that of their friends. She was a kind of raree-show, and it was like her conceit and folly to believe that their interest in her was sincere and genuine. He knew better. Again and again he wrote sternly, solemnly, to warn her that happiness lay at home, not among strangers who cared nothing for her real good, people who spent their lives in amusement and foolishness, in dressing up and rushing from one thing to the next. His disapproval showed itself in every line that he wrote. People in Baltimore all expressed regret, he said, at her departure, and pitied him at being thus left daughterless. She replied to his letters with her usual vivacity, defending herself with spirit. Sometimes her tone was acid.

I perceive with much regret, by your letters respecting me to persons of this country, that you announced to them that I *conceived* myself ill, and had embarked contrary to the wishes of my friends. I shall answer categorically these two accusations, and answer them without temper. The physicians of England [she hoped this would impress him] are willing to give a certificate of their opinion that there is an accumulation of bile in my liver, which would have killed me or produced the last stages of hypochondria in three months had I not gone to sea and tried change of climate. They will likewise state that if the disease does not yield

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to a course of mercury, or the waters of this place, it will fall on the lungs and terminate my life.

As to leaving America without the consent of my friends, it appears to me that, if indeed I have friends there, they would wish me to come to a country where I am cherished, visited, respected, and admired. . . . I acknowledge that the standing I possess in this country is very flattering, and it is not surprising that I should prefer people of rank and distinction who are willing to notice me. Their attentions are very gratuitous, for I am a very poor stranger, and a very unfortunate one on many accounts.

And she begged him not to let it be known that he was angry with her.

In Europe, a handsome woman who is likely to have a fortune may marry well; but if it gets about that her parents are dissatisfied with her, they will think she will get nothing by them, and if she had the beauty of Venus and the talents of Minerva, no one would marry her. . . . The reputation of your fortune would be a great advantage to me abroad, and I am sure you cannot object to my having the honour provided you keep the substance. [As for the criticisms levelled at her by her acquaintances in Baltimore, they were inspired by envy.] Look how they run after the poorest sprigs of nobility, and then you will know what they think of my standing in Europe.

Elizabeth and her father were destined always to bring out the worst in each other. Where his daughter was concerned, Mr. Patterson was stubborn, unforgiving,

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prejudiced, while her father's animosity and disapproval brought out all that was hard and unlovely in Elizabeth's character. In her letters to him she strutted like a peacock. In his to her he growled like the veriest bear.

"They should never," Robert once remarked, "have met."

Adieu, my dear sir [she ended one letter to him], I am going to dress for a ball at Lady Condague's, and am then obliged to go to one at General Trivin's. I expect the Americans in Europe who cannot go out will write lies about those who can. . . . Let people think you are proud of me, which indeed you have good reason to be, as I am very prudent and wise.

"God grant it may be so," retorted her father, two months later, "for nothing would give me greater pleasure. I must, however, say that your ideas of wisdom do not accord with mine."

In September she received her passports to go to France—and informed her father of it in this fashion:

The Count La Chatre, ambassador from France, has just sent me my passport for Paris; but that beautiful country is still torn by faction. The necessary presence of the allied armies renders Paris an expensive residence to strangers, as every house is filled and the indispensable wants of life are consequently much more exorbitant than in times of tranquillity.

But he was not disposed to send her more money on this account. This "seeking for admiration in foreign countries" found no favour with him.

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Surely the most charitable construction to be placed upon such conduct is to suppose that it must proceed from some degree of insanity, for it cannot be supposed that any rational being could act a part so very inconsistent and improper.

I am, dear Betsy,

Yours very sincerely,
W.P.

A letter which she found it not easy to forgive.

Winter in Paris promised to be gay. The Allies were still there, the Duke of Wellington made King Louis XVIII wonder on whose head the crown really rested, and all the celebrated people who had left France at Napoleon's dictation now returned to it. Madame de Staël wrote to Elizabeth: "Are you never coming?" If the country were peaceful enough for Mesdames de Staël and Récamier it was, Elizabeth decided, peaceful enough for her. And Sir Charles and Lady Morgan, she heard, were going too, Lady Morgan to write a book on France, giving a picture of the country under the restored Bourbon regime. That decided her. She said good-bye to her friends in Cheltenham and went to London, where she was delayed for a while by a return of her old gastric trouble. "I am confined with debility," she wrote to Mary, now Mary Patterson. She was not too ill, however, to go about a good deal in society and to sit several times—once as "Calypso"—to an artist named Mr. Newton. But at last she felt sufficiently recovered to undertake the crossing of the Channel. The moment had come.

CHAPTER XII

PARIS at last! And under what astonishing, unlooked-for circumstances! For not only were there all the delights of that great city to be explored and enjoyed, but there was the presence, as well, of many of the most distinguished people of the day, collected there in one huge and fascinating assembly. English, Russians, Austrians and Prussians predominated, while the French population which formed the background, hardly knew whether to suffer its conquerors gladly or wish them at the ends of the earth.

For this lively, curious, heterogeneous society, Elizabeth had a twofold interest. She was the only Bonaparte in France, and she was a beautiful and unfortunate woman. On either count she might have expected a good deal of attention, but the combination was irresistible. From her furnished rooms at No. 18 Rue de la Paix, she went out to nearly every ball, rout and soirée of note in Paris. Invitations came by every post. She was asked to the Court, but in the circumstances felt it incumbent on her to refuse, a gesture which pleased her acquaintances and earned her the respect of the King. She expressed herself as greatly honoured by his wish to see her at Court, but said that as she had received a pension and much kindness at the hands of Napoleon she must beg to be excused, ingratitude not being one of her vices.

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This soon got about—what did not in that world of famous talkers and eager listeners?—and it added to her renown.

It was a brilliant society that she found there, and a gay one, for it was now convinced that with the overthrow of Napoleon the world would soon return to normal conditions again and prosperous times immediately follow. In this belief it spent money wildly; the different nations represented vied with one another in splendid entertainments and the women in dress. Elizabeth caught the fever. She went to Leroy's and bought herself a really fine ball-dress, the most expensive she had ever owned, an act which her natural frugality deplored but her natural vanity rejoiced in. It was worth it, for it took her triumphantly through a ball given by the British Ambassador and Lady Stuart at the new British Embassy, that mansion in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré that had once belonged to Pauline and was still known as the Hôtel Borghese. The Ambassador himself took her in to supper, and on her other side sat the Duke. For he was no longer spoken of as the Duke of Wellington now but simply as the Duke, and it seemed that scarcely a hundred consecutive words were uttered in this social-military-diplomatic world of Paris without a mention of his name.

Elizabeth was now about to experience something very like a passion for this great man, the sort of passion, at any rate, that she was best able to feel; passionate admiration. If he had loved her, she might have been ready to give herself as to a religion or a cause. She thought him the absolute epitome of male perfection. Was there ever such a figure, such a head, such extra-

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ordinarily handsome eyes, such a bold, splendid, imperial nose, such charm of manner? In short, was there ever such a *man*? All these, together with his terrific *réclame*, won her utterly. Waterloo! The echo of those three mournful, glorious, tragic syllables seemed to sound in the ears, in his presence. "Waterloo! The hero of Waterloo!" It was overwhelming. She had heard enough about him now to be tolerably familiar with his history, his character and even his domestic affairs—these last the least interesting part of him, in her opinion. She knew that he was adored by women—how could he fail to be?—and that he had a mousy, inadequate little wife in England. When she was introduced to him her heart beat as hard as when she had first met Jerome, though she displayed equally little sign of that disturbance. After supper he asked her to sit out a dance or two. She gave him one of her most radiant looks, so that an assent was scarcely needed. As they walked through the chattering, lively crowd towards the ball-room they attracted many glances, and she knew it and rejoiced. On the way he turned to her, bending his head, and said lightly, with a kind of gallant raillery that he kept for such lovely women:

"Well, ma'am, so it fell to England's lot to avenge you for the cruel treatment accorded you by our late enemy?"

She flashed her quick little smile at him and answered:

"I bear him no grudge. I am and always shall be one of his greatest admirers."

"And so am I!" he cried. "And so am I! A greater adversary no man ever had. I like to hear you speak so. It seems to be the fashion here, even among

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French ladies who were once his friends, to revile his very name now that he is fallen."

"After all," she said, dryly, "he gave me an annual pension of sixty thousand francs, and I'm not in the habit of biting the hand that feeds me. My father is a wealthy man, but he was so displeased with me for marrying against his wishes and then for preferring to live abroad that he will do little or nothing for me."

"It is the way of parents," he said, "when they wish to show their displeasure. But now? I hope all goes well with you. You have the look of one much smiled upon by fortune."

"If I have," she replied, "it is *grâce à moi-même*, for I was wise enough to think of the future, and save money, and make plans."

"Extraordinary woman! Where did you learn such sagacity?"

She laughed. "It is natural caution, I think. Each year I invested three-quarters of my income, and now—well, at any rate, here I am. I have invested carefully and I have spent frugally. You see, I have a little Bonaparte to think of, as well as myself."

"Does his father do nothing for him?"

"Nothing whatever."

"He should. Even now, I doubt if any of the Bonapartes are badly off."

"Perhaps not," she said, "but I am not inclined to ask favours of any of them."

"I dare say you are right. Tell me about your son."

But they had reached the ball-room, and it was necessary to find seats for themselves, no easy matter in those crowded salons. Elizabeth regretted now, that

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she had not learnt to waltz, for everyone was waltzing. The Duke had learnt, he told her, in Vienna, during the days of Congress, and she had already watched him, that evening, moving over the crowded floor with speed and enthusiasm, and had envied his partners. She hated to be disarranged or made uncomfortably warm, and thought that she still preferred the quadrille, but it would have been a pleasure merely to be held in those arms! She thought of the letter she would shortly write to her father.

"I went to a ball given by the British Ambassador and met the great Duke of Wellington. He is the handsomest and most charming of men. If I have any friends in Baltimore I am sure they will be glad to hear that I am so happy, and so fortunate. All I lacked that night were fine jewels and the feeling of security that money gives."

"Now," he said, when they had found a place to sit, "tell me about that boy. How old is he?"

She described Bo at some length. "He has sufficient ability," she said, "to encourage me to think that he may some day make his mark in the world. Certainly I shall be bitterly disappointed if he does not."

"Never count on it," he advised. "Never count on it. One's own children are so rarely brilliant."

"But Bo is so quick, so very promising. It is not merely that I am a fond mother. In fact I think I am a very critical mother—but I cannot be mistaken about his intelligence. I am determined to educate him in Europe, perhaps with the idea of fitting him for the world of diplomacy."

"Many people tell me," he said, "that you cannot do better than to educate a boy in Switzerland. At any

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rate, it is worth your consideration, I think, and would not be expensive."

They had no opportunity then for a longer talk, for someone soon broke in upon them, and a series of such interruptions followed. It was a talk she would have liked very well to continue, but it was so much punctuated by greetings and introductions that it lost all coherence. The Duke introduced her to Talleyrand, now the King's Chamberlain, and Talleyrand, who also did not dance, took charge of her, and on learning that she was interested in the house itself, took her from room to room showing her pictures, furniture, ornaments and hangings that had once belonged to Pauline.

"She was one of the first," he said, "to smell disaster. But what an eye for beauty she had! You admire it, do you not, this boudoir? I find those clusters of gold stars, those primrose and lilac satin hangings quite exquisite."

"Exquisite!" agreed Elizabeth, and thought, "She might have received me here herself, if——" She said aloud, "I feel I know Pauline, Jerome spoke of her so often. '*La jolie Paulette*', he called her, though I don't think there was much love lost between them. All this is intensely interesting to me, as you can imagine. It helps me to visualize her."

Talleyrand could tell her anecdotes of Pauline by the hundred. He told her, with a kind of delicate malice, anecdotes of all the Bonaparte family, and she listened with keen appreciation. What was this man, she wondered? Traitor? Turncoat? Or a good, an invaluable servant of France? Some said one, some another. She herself inclined to the latter view. In

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any case, he charmed her, he looked and was so precisely what she had been led to expect, with his thin frame, his delicate hands, his face that was half Voltaire and half Mephistopheles. She knew that besides being famous for his wit he had the reputation of being politically cunning and incalculable. That, she thought, was merely because he was so infinitely cleverer than other people. He was a savant, a sophisticate, a polished man of the world; qualities she immensely admired. All the time that he was peering at bronzes, showing her the fine alabaster vases that Pauline had loved to fill with flowers, fingering snuff-boxes with his thin hands, he kept up a running commentary. "This was made for her by an admirer—see her profile on the lid—and what a profile! This—ah!—there is a scandalous story connected with this; but it would take too long to tell." Altogether she found him a fascinating character, though not at all in the way that the Duke was fascinating. As for her, she was very much to his taste.

"Forgive me if I speak of personal matters on such a brief acquaintance," he said, as they sat down to rest not far from the ball-room, "but in appearance you are astonishingly like Pauline. Any number of people besides myself have remarked on it this evening. You are the same type, you have the same height and figure. Have you been told so? But of course you have. Only you, madame"—he darted his bright, shrewd eyes to left and right—"have two perfect little ears, two exquisite little ears, while Pauline's are badly formed and cause her the most intense mortification. Some day you should meet her. It would be an amusing *rencontre*."

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"I want very much to meet her," Elizabeth told him, "though she is not the sort of woman, I imagine, that I would choose for a friend. She is all vanity, she has all the feminine faults. You see, my preference for your sex is so great that I find I only like women who possess masculine traits."

"That is curious," he said, smiling; and when he smiled his whole face seemed to run to a point (a pointed nose) surrounded by deeply engraved lines; "for however much we adore women, we seldom carry our fondness so far that we prefer men with feminine traits."

"Possibly not," she agreed, "but it is not quite the same. For when we say that a man is wholly masculine we intend it as a compliment, which it is; but when we say a woman is wholly feminine we mean that she is silly, vain and probably spiteful."

"Ah!" he said, holding up a finger, and inclining his head in a bird-like way, "but when we wish to praise a woman we say that she is all woman, and we can pay her no higher compliment."

"Then you think better of my sex than I do," she retorted. "Don't think to please me by flattering women."

"If I flatter your sex," he said, "it is only a preliminary to a more personal kind of flattery, which I see I can no longer withhold. It is a pity that the word 'flattery' is associated in our minds with lies and fawnings. If I told you that you were one of the most beautiful of women, the world would say I was using flattery; and yet I would be perfectly sincere; indeed, I would be stating an obvious truth. Observe my dilemma. How am I to tell you how greatly I admire you without laying myself open to the charge of using

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the false and lying language of a courtier? ”

“ You flattered me quite sufficiently,” she replied, smiling, “ when you said that I was like Pauline. Now tell me something. Joseph Bonaparte has two daughters. Some day I might marry my son to one of them—it has been very much in my mind. Is he a man whom I could like and trust? One hears many conflicting reports about him, but you would know.”

“ Joseph? ” he said, and paused for a moment in thought. “ The easiest way to describe him would be to say that he is acquisitive, kind, pompous, greedy, vain. But it would be unfair to attach such epithets to him without saying how far his pomposity might be caused by lack of self-confidence, or how closely, in his case, greed might be allied to mere zest and enjoyment; appreciation, let us say, of the admirable and the beautiful. Evil, they tell us, is absence of good, and I could draw you another picture of him, though it might be a negative one. As for trusting him, you are a clever woman. You will no doubt say to yourself when you meet him, ‘ So far and no farther ’.”

She nodded. “ I understand, and I’ll remember what you have said. There is one member of that family of whom you cannot draw a negative picture, try as you may. Napoleon.”

“ I might,” he said. “ I could say of him that he was not a man who could endure—as most of us can and must endure—that history should take no account of him. Such men perceive history as an enormous book with great white pages in which they must scrawl their names or die. It is a necessity, an urge that they cannot control.”

“ You have written your name very large in that

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book yourself," she said. "What prompted you? Ambition?"

"No," he said, smiling, "I am not a maker of history. I am only an interpreter, perhaps an interferer, sometimes a diverter. I have watched the great cart—I have changed the simile, you will observe; a moment ago it was a book, now it is a cart—I have watched the great cart go creaking on its way, perhaps to disaster, and I have given, now and again, a pull on the reins, sometimes unsuccessfully. That is all. I am never inside the cart, I am only on the ground, watching to see which way it will go."

"It is a safer position," she said, dryly. "You cannot fall off."

"One may stumble, and the wheels pass over one. It is necessary to be nimble. My critics—and they are as the sands of the sea—say that I am too nimble."

He had spent thirty months of exile, at one period of his life, in America. He had not been happy—exiles are rarely happy—and she expressed to him with complete candour her own feelings about the land of her birth. "Though as a rule," she told him, "I neither criticize it myself when I am talking to Europeans, nor allow them to criticize it. But you are different."

For a long time they talked of the war that was now ended, and one of the last things he said to her was:

"Whether I have done good or ill in the world, I would at least like these words for my epitaph, 'All his efforts were for peace.' Perhaps, when all is said and done, that is the best thing that can be said of a man, and in my case it happens to be the truth."

She could have talked to him for ever, but Sir Charles Morgan found and claimed her. Talleyrand,

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when she had gone, went to the Duke and thanked him for having introduced him to so charming and intelligent a woman.

"She married the wrong brother," he said. "What a wife she would have made for Napoleon!"

Altogether it was a wonderful evening. Besides Talleyrand and the Duke, she met Blücher, Nesselrode, Sir Walter Scott, the Castlereaghs, the Granvilles, and a host of others. Madame de Staël was there—at last they were in Paris together, she and "Corinne"—and there were always Sir Charles and Lady Morgan to keep a watchful and friendly eye upon her, and to see that she was never for an instant alone. She sat out another dance with the Duke. "Was there *ever* such a profile?" she asked herself. "If only I can make a friend of him!"

But he was the busiest man in Paris. And even if she had succeeded in making a friend of him—which somehow she failed to do—she would have found a whole host of rivals. Lady Frances Webster; Frances, Lady Shelley; Lady Caroline Lamb (always a little apt to make herself conspicuous)—they were all there, sunning themselves in his presence, for besides his endless, complicated duties there was a perpetual round of social engagements. He was charming to her when they met, invited her to dine at his house, the Hôtel de la Reynière, and later asked her to a Grand Ball in honour of the marriage of the Duc and Duchesse de Berri (at which an adventure befell her). But whenever they were together she was aware that she had not his whole attention; always a distressing circumstance, but particularly so to a beauty. Every eye was upon him, everyone hung upon his words, and the women, she

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thought, behaved outrageously, throwing themselves quite shamelessly at his head.

The truth was that although he thought her extremely lovely, he was chilled by her shrewd and practical common sense—always far less chilling to a Frenchman! Women and investments—he thought they went ill together. Four per cent, five per cent, six per cent . . . women should know less of such things, talk less about them. (Not but that it would have been an excellent thing if his wife Kitty had possessed some of Madame Bonaparte's financial acumen!) He thought her good company, but was far from losing his head about her. He liked gracious, spacious, expansive women; women who chattered a great deal—yes, even foolishly—who made a great fuss about him; this not because he was vain, but because it amused and charmed him. Madame Bonaparte possessed no amiable weaknesses and follies, or none that he could discover. She had not the trick of making a tired man feel wholly at his ease, of making him feel his simplest, happiest, most human self. And when a man lived the life he lived, such moments of relaxation were precious.

So that for once, Elizabeth's pointed remarks, her cool dignity and her physical perfection missed their mark. He admired, but there was no warmth in his admiration. She got on far better with Talleyrand.

It was extremely amusing to be in Paris, she thought, during the dividing of the spoils of Napoleon's conquests. She and Lady Morgan, returning from a ball early one morning, saw the "Horses of St. Mark" taken down from their pedestal before the Tuileries to be returned to Venice; they even saw the Apollo Belvedere lying in his great wooden coffin ready for transport;

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and, in company with the authoress, she one day paid a visit—just too late—to the Venus dei Medici in the Louvre, and saw only her pedestal, that incomparable lady having departed that very morning before day-break—the feelings of the Parisians were thus far spared—“*Sous bonne escort*,” the Louvre attendant told them. The Spanish Ambassador sent all the Murillos back to Spain, but the Tzar acquired, by purchase, many works of art that should have gone back to Cassel, things for which those Napoleonic busts presented by Jerome were a poor substitute.

It was a subject that interested everybody, and formed a never-ending topic for conversation and dispute. Feelings rose high; those of the French, who had come to look upon these objects as their own, rose highest.

“We are all connoisseurs and amateurs of art these days,” remarked Elizabeth, with sarcasm. “Even the crossing-sweepers appear to find these objects necessary to their happiness, though it is doubtful if they even knew of their existence before.”

She was now making more than acquaintances in Paris, she was making friends. “For myself I want nothing, now,” she said to Lady Morgan, “but for my son I want everything. If I trouble to make people like me it is because I want him to see, one day, how well his mother is regarded here.”

The sprightly, quick-witted little authoress was busy collecting the material for a book on France, and welcomed the society of Elizabeth in her journeyings whenever she could obtain it (for Elizabeth preferred not to absent herself too long or too far from the pleasures of Paris). She lacked Lady Morgan’s ardent curiosity, and marvelled at her love for poking her

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charming and inquiring Irish nose into every peasant's cottage or farm or château to which she could gain admittance. Elizabeth regarded the poor as the sad, dull, necessary background of a tapestry worked in brilliant colours by the fortunate and the well-to-do. The pattern absorbed her, the background she scarcely regarded at all. As for the peasants, she could only interest herself in the more picturesque ones, and especially on fête days, for then the women wore great frilled caps upon which they tied wide-brimmed straw hats, corsets and petticoats of gay, contrasting colours, huge white linen or woollen sleeves, and about their necks numbers of gold chains from which hung crosses or hearts or little charms. So attired they were a diverting and pleasing sight, and one could forget their poverty, their ceaseless hard work and their ignorance.

Now and again it was amusing, too, to question the country people about their feelings for Napoleon, a subject that never failed to interest Elizabeth; and she and Lady Morgan were delighted one day when a peasant woman replied, "As to that, he has done too much harm for us to speak good of him, and too much good for us to speak harm of him."

"*Voilà!*" cried Lady Morgan. "There, in a few words, you have the true sentiment of the whole nation!" And she hastened to write them down in her little note-book.

"How lucky you are," Elizabeth sometimes said to her, "to have this tremendous interest in your life!" She had much, Elizabeth considered, to be thankful for: her powers of concentration and hard work, her talent, and last but by no means least, her good, kind, devoted Sir Charles, in whose eyes she could do nothing wrong.

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But while Lady Morgan busied herself making observations for her book, Elizabeth made them for her own private purposes. For she too was quick to note (and to absorb) the manners, customs and ideas she observed about her. Everything seemed to her far better regulated than in America, even better, she sometimes thought, than in England. The French view of marriage, for instance, struck her as eminently sensible, and she was pleased to find that here no young girl in good standing ever appeared in society until her marriage had already been arranged by her parents. They could be seen in their own homes, surrounded by their families, or at small, early dances called *bal-parés*, where the dancing was confined to quadrilles and cotillions; otherwise they were kept wholly in the background, and the lives of their young brothers were almost as severely regulated.

"I want to bring up Bo in the French way," she told Lady Morgan. "Whom he is to marry will be *my* affair, not his. He will not be allowed to please his own undeveloped fancy. In America the young are treated like responsible persons and allowed to decide the most serious matters for themselves. Which is obviously quite absurd."

It was a period when "ultras" abounded. All those aristocrats who had been exiled or who had lain dormant during the Revolution and during the days of the Empire now sprang to life, refreshed and even strengthened, many of them well deserving the name of "*royalistes enragés*" that was frequently applied to them. When she went to a ball or soirée and listened to the announcing of the guests, it thrilled her to hear the spate of titles. "Madame la Baronne", "Madame

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la Comtesse", "Monsieur le Duc", "Monsieur le Vicomte", "Monsieur le Marquis", etc., etc. It satisfied some craving in her. It made her feel, "Here am I, in the midst of all this. . . . And they wanted me to stay at home, in the obscurity of Baltimore, and play the part of a discarded wife. What a fool I would have been to listen to them! "

There was someone else who had little taste for the obscurity of Baltimore. Robert and Mary Caton, married at last, were soon to sail for Europe on their honeymoon, bringing with them Mary's sisters Louisa and Elizabeth. Their coming was awaited by Elizabeth Bonaparte with mixed feelings. At present, American women in Europe were a rarity, beautiful ones still more of a rarity, and now her almost unique position would be challenged, and by her own sisters-in-law. Mary, especially, was sure to attract attention. Not only that, but they were bringing letters, she heard, from Sir Charles Bagot, the British Ambassador in Washington, to the Duke and Duchess of Wellington (Lady Bagot was the Duke's own niece), to Thomas Coke of Holkham, and to other persons of interest and of note. This was unexpected; Elizabeth had thought they would depend upon her to find them friends and amusements. In-laws were pretty generally a trial, she considered, and she thought it quite likely that Mary would prove to be no exception to the rule. Well, one must bear it as one must bear all the other trials and ills of life.

Meanwhile there was the ball that the Duke was giving in honour of the Duc and Duchesse de Berri, to which she had been eagerly looking forward for some time. The dress that she had bought at Leroy's she sent to a cheap little dressmaker to be copied, with some

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slight alterations, in another stuff and another colour, and she bought herself a head-dress composed of feathers and imitation stones in which she looked surpassingly lovely. Sir Charles and Lady Morgan had asked her to go with them—there was no end to their kindness—and she fully expected to enjoy the evening.

It was a gathering of people such as Paris, surely, could never before have seen together. Besides English, Irish, Scotch, Americans, Prussians, Austrians (and one Turk at least, in the shape of the Turkish Ambassador), there was the aristocratic world of Paris as well, and mingling with all these, many who had won fame serving Napoleon and the Empire. Quite early in the evening Elizabeth was introduced to Marmont, one of Napoleon's generals, and now the Duc de Ragusa. He had been so close to Napoleon that she knew she might have discussed him most profitably—and no other personality interested her quite so much—but for the fact that Marmont had basely deserted him, so the subject was better not mentioned. He asked her to dance, an invitation worded in a far from reassuring fashion: "I fear, madame, that I am not a waltzer, but let us try," and she was not sorry to be able to assure him that she had never waltzed in her life. So he led her to a seat, and after paying her a good many heavy and laboured compliments, which failed to please her, was obliged to leave her to speak to someone to whom he had promised to give a message. "I will be but a few moments, madame," he said, with a bow. She longed to slip away, for he was neither easy nor amusing to talk to, and looked about her for some way of escape.

A tall young man was already approaching her, and, always clever at putting names and faces together, she

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remembered that he was a certain M. Denon whom she had met only a few days before, when, with Lady Morgan, she had visited the famous Denon collection. He was related to the Egyptologist himself, and had shown her many interesting things she might otherwise have missed.

Denon senior was an artist as well as a connoisseur of art, and had accompanied Napoleon on several of his campaigns—notably the Egyptian campaign—for the purpose of making drawings and sketches, which he was sometimes obliged to do under fire. It had also fallen to him to advise the Emperor concerning the works of art to be brought to Paris from the conquered cities, a task in which he had shown the highest discernment and skill. The young man—she supposed he was a nephew—had made himself extremely agreeable, and Elizabeth was not at all displeased to see him here. He was quite obscure, but he had influential friends and was to be seen at balls and other functions, because his manners were excellent, his conversation easy and his appearance admirable.

“I saw you sitting alone, madame,” he said. “I knew it could be for a moment only, so I hurried to you, hoping for a word with you.”

“The Duc de Ragusa,” she explained, “has just left me, to give a message to someone, but I feel too tired to wait for him with patience, and far too thirsty. I am glad you came.”

“You must have champagne, if you are tired,” he said, as they walked together towards one of the refreshment rooms. “It will restore you. And here is a vacant settee. I am the luckiest of men. When I saw you that day at my cousin’s, I wondered if I should

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ever have the great good fortune to meet you again."

In the world in which Elizabeth now moved, young men seldom came her way. She had been associating almost exclusively with the wealthy and the famous, and there were not many among them whose years were as few as those of young Denon. For the first time in many months she remembered that she was only thirty, and that it was pleasant to be with someone younger than herself. When he brought the champagne and sat down beside her, they raised their glasses to each other in the friendliest fashion. For some time they talked of personalities, of Paris, of London where he had once been, and then he said, with an earnestness that was not unmingled with shyness:

"Madame, there is something I must tell you. When I first heard who you were, I could scarcely credit it. Was it possible, I asked myself, that any man other than a madman could leave a wife so unspeakably lovely at the bidding even of an Emperor? And a Frenchman, besides. Madame, it is a terrible thought! A Frenchman! Well, there are Frenchmen and Frenchmen, and I try to console myself with the thought that you are far too kind and too intelligent to hate all Frenchmen for the insane folly of one."

She was a little startled by this bold approach, especially in a young man whose manner gave no hint of boldness.

"Was it so insane?" she asked, dryly. "If you were offered a kingdom on the one hand and a wife on the other, are you so sure——?"

"Pardon, madame! Not only should it be easy to give up a kingdom for the woman one loves, but even a life."

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"I fancy," she said, "that it might be easier to give up a life than a kingdom. When a life is to be sacrificed, there is usually a crisis, the decision is made by the instincts, which do not wait upon thought. But in this case my unfortunate husband had days—weeks—in which to consider which he would choose. And we were separated. If I had been with him, he would, I feel sure, have decided differently."

"What you say makes me like him no better," the young man said, almost angrily. "Where such matters are concerned one makes up one's mind instantly; it is love that decides, and one does not waver. For weeks, you say, he wavered. Believe me, madame, had I been your friend or your brother, he would not have decided as he did, and continued to live."

She raised her eyebrows.

"Dear me! I never thought of that! Of course, my brothers William or Robert should have challenged him to a duel. How very remiss of them! But you see, Monsieur Denon, we are Americans, and Americans are very reasonable people and look to the law for their revenges, if revenge they must have."

"I have nothing to say against Americans, whom I greatly admire," said the young man. "But, madame, you have not married again. Does that mean that you hold all men in contempt because one has shown himself contemptible?"

"Not at all," she said. "I like men. I find them infinitely more congenial than women."

"Then why——?"

"Because to marry again at my age is to give up an independence that one has grown accustomed to, and which one values."

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"Independence?" he asked, his fine eyes flashing, "what is that? It is an illusion. We all depend on someone, or on one another. Love is dependence; affection, friendship . . . you cannot cut yourself off from those."

"I assure you I can cut myself off from love," she said. "It is not a state of mind I envy or wish ever to experience. I have a son whom I love, and that must suffice. The sort of love of which you speak is a weakness, a folly, or else a mere delusion."

"Madame!" he cried, "no, no, please do not say that! It makes me feel that you have been hurt too much, so that you fear to love again."

"As for being hurt," she said, with a little shrug, "that was long ago. It is over. The wounds have healed. It is simply that I happen to be a woman of common sense."

"And what do you consider that to be?"

"To possess common sense is to possess the ability to order one's life in a sane and practical way, without tedious and unnecessary complications."

"I see," he said. "To feel nothing, to experience nothing?"

She nodded, with her brief smile.

"To feel nothing, certainly, if one can contrive it."

"And you would be satisfied to live like that always? Like a block of wood or a stone? I do not believe it."

"I am sorry," she said, "for it is true."

He leaned suddenly nearer to her, then bent his head and fingered a tassel that hung from the fan in her lap. She looked at his thick, vigorous dark hair, his well-shaped, close-set ears, saw dark lashes resting upon a lean, brown cheek, and a generous young mouth that

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now twitched a little at the corners, as though with unsaid words, and found them all agreeable enough. Suddenly he dropped the tassel and sat up.

"Madame," he said, "will you let me see you again? Somewhere where there are not so many people, and where we may perhaps talk more naturally? This noise and chatter makes real conversation impossible."

"What place do you suggest?" she asked, amused by the young man's earnestness. "I would be more than pleased to visit the Denon collection again."

"No, no," he said, "not among objects of art. I see enough of those. Out of doors, where we may be freer, more ourselves. I would like best to take you into the country, but I dare not ask for so much of your time." (He was a lover of Rousseau, she had already discovered.)

"There are the gardens of the Luxembourg, which are charming, even now. May I call for you and take you there one day? I much prefer them to the Tuileries, where there is too much fashion."

"What an odd young man you are!" she said.

"Alas, I am ordinary enough."

"You are quite unlike the other young men I meet."

"In what way, madame?"

"You show an earnestness, a seriousness that I am not accustomed to, at least in Europe. In America young men are sometimes serious enough, but usually in pursuit of their fortunes, which is all that interests them."

"I would be happier if you had merely called me sincere."

"Oh, as to that I cannot tell, on such a short acquaintance."

"It would be quite true, madame. Then will you

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come to the Luxembourg Gardens with me one day? Please! It would give me infinite happiness."

She agreed to go with him on the following Wednesday, if the weather were fine. He lived alone, she learnt, in an apartment in the Marais, liked talking to old people and children, and enjoyed making the acquaintance of odd and unexpected characters. He composed poetry, painted, and wrote articles for the newspapers. He was undecided whether to make a political career for himself or whether to confine his attentions to the arts. He was twenty-six. He wished to distinguish himself in the world, but only if by so doing he could also benefit that world in some way. He was romantic, idealistic, full of sentiment. He had lost a sister, he told her, whom he had adored and who had possessed every charm and talent. His father was dead, his mother had married again and he saw little of her now. The proposed stroll in the Luxembourg Gardens seemed to Elizabeth a bit of harmless folly, and one which she would be quite unlikely to repeat, but she saw no reason for refusing to go. Besides, the rapidly developing worship of this young man did not wholly displease her, though at the same time it amused her to present to him her coldest, most practical, most unsentimental self. He possessed a directness and a sincerity—there was no doubt of his sincerity—that could not but arouse her admiration, and she thought she had never before met anyone more sensitive or more responsive. Already he was taking a quite touching interest in her welfare, and her spiritual good.

"I have certainly not been encouraging him," she said to herself after that walk in the Luxembourg

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Gardens, for she had made fun of him and his ideals in a most merciless way. She recalled his look when she had expressed her views on marriage. "If I were foolish enough to love a man," she had told him, "I would no more dream of marrying him than I would dream of offering my hand to a mad dog to bite. To marry for love is to invite every kind of disillusion and disappointment. The only happy married people I know are those whose marriages have been arranged for wholly sensible and practical reasons. As for forming attachments without marriage, that is quite as dangerous, and, for women, demoralizing as well. I don't at all approve of the present fashion—or perhaps I should say the present European fashion—for *liaisons*."

"Then you would rule love out of your life completely?"

"Completely," she affirmed.

"I do not believe one word of it," he said. "A woman who has suffered as you have suffered makes an armour for herself and takes care that nothing ever pierces it, lest the next wound should be mortal. But underneath it——"

"I have suffered, of course," she said, for she did not wish to disclaim an experience that could not but make her more attractive in the eyes of the world, "and the result is that I have now learnt, I hope, how to live and how to conduct myself in order to avoid further suffering. There are plenty of ills which we cannot avoid, such as bad health and old age and poverty, but at least if we can free ourselves from avoidable ills, we ought to do so."

He argued with her warmly, while not believing one

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half that she said. He could not be persuaded that such a lovely, delicate exterior could conceal anything but what was gentle, feminine and lovable. He had been ready to love her as soon as he had heard who she was. His sympathies had gone out to her, instantly, and his love easily followed them, for he was one of those men who can only love those whom they also pity and long to protect.

As for her, she found him attractive enough, though she could not help wishing that he had some claim on the world's attention, perhaps as an established writer or painter or poet, or else as a man of birth and title. It was difficult, otherwise, to explain her interest in him, and might cause people to imagine that she was indulging an infatuation, for only on such grounds was their association easily explained. His appearance, certainly, was admirable. He had the straightest and neatest of legs, a strong brown throat, and a pair of very handsome dark blue eyes. His white teeth and luxuriant dark hair made him seem like a perfect hero of fiction, so that if she were to be seen much about with him, she must expect to cause a certain amount of gossip. She went with him to Fontainebleau—it was her second visit—and he pointed out to her much that she had missed before. He greatly admired Napoleon's military genius, but withheld from him any other admiration. "*Bon général, mauvais souverain,*" was his summing up. Indeed he detested war and war-makers. Not only was he knowledgeable about history, but he could talk about books, art and music with good taste and understanding. She had greatly admired some of the bronzes in the Denon collection, and he begged her to visit his apartment one day to see two Chinese bronzes which

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his cousin had given him; one a four-handled cup, the other an incense-burner, a figure of Lao-Tze riding on a water-buffalo.

"They are as fine," he said, "as any I have ever seen, and were greatly admired by Napoleon. I have some sketches and drawings by Parmegiano and two by Guercino, and one drawing by Rembrandt himself. I also have one of those three-legged crackled china toads you admired the other day, which I picked up on a barrow on the Quais. Tell me you will come! It will be the happiest day of my whole life."

"I cannot possibly come alone," said Elizabeth. "Perhaps you'd invite Lady Morgan too. If she agrees, then it might be possible."

"It *must* be possible. It will enable me to say to myself, years from now, 'That is the chair she sat in; that book she opened with her own hands. She smiled, toad, at you, and held you in her hands.' Give me that happiness, madame! "

He spoke to Lady Morgan later, and when she agreed, as she promptly did—for she was writing a chapter on "Domestic Manners and Affections", and had not yet seen the interior of a bachelor's establishment—he was overjoyed.

"Really," Elizabeth thought, "he is very much in love, this young man! What a pity I feel nothing but liking for him—or what a blessing! "

Lady Morgan told Elizabeth that she could not accompany her to M. Denon's apartment, as she was taking *déjeuner-à-la-fourchette* on the other side of Paris, but promised to meet her there at any time she pleased, and carefully noted down the address. "I will not fail you," she said, and added, in an aside, "but

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surely, if I am a little late, you will not object to a *tête-à-tête* with a young man, and—*par parenthèse*—such a charming one.”

“Believe me, there is nothing I should dislike more,” said Elizabeth. “So promise to come in good time.”

M. Denon called for Elizabeth in a fiacre. It was dirty, like all the Paris fiacres, and she took care to hold her skirts up away from the floor. It was an exquisite day, in early spring, very clear, with a sky washed wonderfully blue by recent showers. The streets were still wet, but already the flower-sellers were out—“*les bouquetières*”, Elizabeth now liked to call them—with their bunches of violets and lilies-of-the-valley, and the vendors of handkerchiefs, cotton and woollen stuffs, trinkets and utensils were once more setting them out upon their gaily coloured stalls. On the boulevards people sat in front of cafés reading papers, talking, drinking wine or coffee and laughing at the antics of those perambulating clowns who, seeming to appear from nowhere, set up their little improvised platforms, performed their antics and cracked their jokes. Pretty young *grisettes* tottered across streets that were filled with a confused jumble of carts and carriages, on their needle-like heels, their black eyes darting this way and that, and soldiers from half a dozen nations, swaggering past, eyed them, ogled, or accosted them, according to their natures. The trees were already green, casting a delicate shade, and terraces were gay with flowers. “Paris, how beautiful you are!” Elizabeth thought, “and how much of your beauty you owe to the man whom you have allowed to go into exile!” Young Denon, too, rejoiced, for such days soften hearts and let love in.

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He and Elizabeth talked, as they drove, about Bo. She had just received a letter from her father enclosing one that Bo had written to him in French from his school in Emmitsburg. Young Denon was much interested in the boy and liked to discuss his future with Elizabeth. "You should give him another father," he had more than once said, which brought from her the indignant answer that she was perfectly capable of being both mother and father to him herself.

"Read this," she said, offering the letter to him. "My father sent it to me. I suppose it might be from any child, but to me it has in it much of the boy's character."

MY DEAR GRANDFATHER [wrote Bo],

I have never written to you a letter in French because you do not understand it; but to give you proof of my goodwill to learn it, I take my pen for this purpose. I want to give you a proof of my love for you in writing you a letter in French. How do you do? As for me, I am very well and I have a great wish to see you!

Farewell, my dear grandfather, it is all I wish to say at present, but I hope you will answer my letter soon. I am your very obedient and loving grandson,

JÉRÔME BONAPARTE.

"It is charming," said young Denon, and there was in his voice and in his face something tender and paternal. When she gave him that letter from her son, he felt that she had admitted him at one step into her private family life. Something personal and intimate

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was established between them when he had held in his hands a letter written by her child; it was a bond, a link that had not been there before, and they could never, come what might, be strangers to each other again. No gesture of hers could have pleased him more, or meant more to him, for in her relation to her son he believed he discovered the true woman, the woman with whom he had fallen in love.

"Jerome!" he said as she put the letter back into her bag. "What will that name come to mean to him one day, I wonder? To me it has come to mean something wholly despicable, and I am glad you do not use it. But Bonaparte—that is a name one follows into battle. It is a banner, a symbol; it is a whole epoch!"

"That," she said, with her quick little smile, "is why I have no wish to change it."

"It has never been a good name for women," he said. "You would be better without it."

"Thank you," she retorted, "but it has at least brought me such good fortune as I possess." Then she added, as he was about to reply, "No, no, we will not argue about it. It is too fine a day for arguments. Tell me—you have never spoken of it and I have never asked, but what you said about the name a moment ago made me think of it—did *you* actually follow Napoleon into battle? Were you in his army?"

By way of reply he took her hand, from which she had drawn her glove, and, baring his head, he raised it to his hair. "There," he said, pressing her fingers gently against his skull, "do you feel that?"

She drew her hand away quickly with a slight feeling of repugnance.

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"A scar—it doesn't show. I never noticed——"

"My hair covers it."

"When and where did you get it?"

"It was given to me by an English sabre at Waterloo."

"Was it very bad? Did you suffer?"

"They did not think I would live. I was unconscious for many days. . . . I do not like talking of it even now."

"Then we will not talk of it," she said.

"At times," he said, "the pain is still very great. I have headaches that make me wish to speak to no one; to be quite alone. But they come less often now than formerly."

"No doubt they will go altogether, in time," she said.

She had disliked the feel of the wound, but the fact that he had received it at Waterloo gave him an added interest in her eyes. Certainly he was a charming young man, and his adoration, had she been other than she was, might have been a danger—or a consolation. She frightened young men as a rule, she chilled them, and knew it. She had tried to chill this one, but it appeared to be useless. He was an incurable romantic and idealist, and if he had fallen in love with her it was certainly no fault of hers.

The fiacre drew up in front of a tall house, and Denon sprang out and turned to assist her.

"Let me send the carriage away," he begged. "Otherwise you will feel that you ought not to keep it waiting, and it might make you decide to go sooner than you need. Please say I may send it away."

"Very well," she answered. "Lady Morgan is certain to keep hers, in any case." And she thought,

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"I hope she comes in good time. Not that I cannot take care of myself, but to be alone with this young man in his apartment is not at all *comme il faut*."

They walked up three flights of stone stairs, and Denon knocked sharply on a heavy door, which was opened by a small, thin, elderly man in old-fashioned dress. A country servant, obviously, someone who did not choose to conform to the ways of the town. From a dark entrance hall, which was hung with many prints and engravings, they went into a large living-room whose windows overlooked some gardens planted thickly with chestnut trees which were now in flower. The room itself was furnished with heavy pieces of provincial furniture, some of walnut and some of oak, and all of a kind that was banished, now, from smart Parisian drawing-rooms. The window-curtains were of heavy stuff of a dull red, and over the mantelpiece was a charming portrait of a young woman in a plain blue taffeta dress, wearing a tiny bunch of flowers in her bosom and another in her hair.

"That is my sister Sylvie," he said, gently.

Elizabeth could only murmur, "How lovely she is! " It was hard to believe that anything so fresh and young and smiling could have vanished into the grave. He did not refer to the picture again, but took off her cloak and laying it over a chair, told the servant, Victoire, to bring refreshments.

"I do not know what your preferences are," he said, "but I have a tea that is a mixture of Souchong and Hyson; my friends tell me it is good."

"There is nothing I like better," said Elizabeth. "I grew very fond of tea while I was in England." She had gone to a large Boule cabinet—the one piece of

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modern furniture in the room—which she saw contained his treasures. “There is your Lao-Tze! What a beautiful thing!”

He took it out for her and placed it in her hands.

“It must be very valuable indeed,” she said, turning it about. “There can be no doubt of that.”

“I only know that I like it,” he answered. She examined the two-handled bronze cup, and then the toad, which amused her; he then showed her some Etruscan vases which Denon senior had given him, and various other treasures.

“I like the Lao-Tze the best,” she said, going back to it.

“It is yours,” he told her. “I intended that you should have it. Victoire will wrap it up for you.”

But she protested that nothing would induce her to take it from him. She had refused all the valuable things that Demidoff had wished to give her, and she had no intention of accepting a present of such value from Denon.

“Then the toad,” he pleaded. “Please, please, it would give me such happiness if you were to accept something that was once mine, and keep it, and think of me.” He seemed so disappointed at her refusals that she at last accepted a sketch of Napoleon from the pencil of David.

“I would rather you had permitted me to give you the Lao-Tze,” he said. “This is only a hasty, unfinished sketch, and of little value.” But she was delighted with it, and would not be persuaded to change her mind.

Victoire, stooping as he came, with the weight of the tray, placed tea and little cakes on a table near the window, bowed to Elizabeth and withdrew.

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"What a delightful old man!" she said.

"He was my father's servant in our old home, in Chalon-sur-Soâne. When my father died he followed me to Paris. He is almost deaf, but he has learnt to read my lips."

"An ideal servant," she laughed, "for a bachelor!"

She was touched, as many women are touched, by the sight of this simple, masculine establishment which owed nothing whatever to the hand of any woman. She thought it did him great credit, for it showed that he knew how to live with refinement, how to make his life agreeable on a small income. He rose in her estimation. She liked people who knew how to order their lives with intelligence. What, she wondered, would her own life be like if she were married to him? How long would it take for Madame Bonaparte to be wholly lost in Madame Denon? How little, she thought, she would gain by such an alliance, how much she would be giving up! And how tedious always to have to consult the wishes of another! If she married this young man, she would have, for a few years, a lover, then, at best, a friend. She might have children, and of what use to bring children into the world when one had so little to offer them? As for taking him as a lover—that was equally impossible, and she marvelled that there were women who, for the mere pleasures of the senses, could risk so much.

Then, as they sat talking and drinking tea, she suddenly remembered that it was getting late and that Lady Morgan had not yet come. She went to the window, hoping to see her cabriolet drive up, but the street was empty.

"This is most unfortunate," she said. "Something

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must have detained her. What would people say if they heard I had spent a whole afternoon alone in the apartment of a young bachelor? ”

“ Would it matter what they said? Do you care? ”

“ Enormously,” she said, giving him her quick smile.

“ I do not believe it. You say things you do not mean, because it amuses you to pretend that you are another sort of woman. I know you better than you think.”

“ How can you possibly know me? It seems to me that you refuse to know me as I am. Believe me, I speak the truth.”

“ I know you because I love you.”

He spoke so very simply and tenderly that a little responsive shudder went through her. He had got up too, and was standing close beside her at the window, and now she was sharply conscious of his nearness. Heavens! Was it possible that she actually felt something more than mere liking, mere friendship, for this undistinguished though pleasing young man? His words seemed to throw a chain about them both, drawing them together, so that she felt they were alone in a little intimate world of the emotions, a world whose claims she had almost forgotten.

“ Come, come, Monsieur Denon, believe me, such protests are quite unnecessary! I am not at all one of those women who, if opportunity offers, are insulted if they are not made love to.”

Foolish, unnecessary words, that he wholly disregarded. In his face she saw such adoration, such exquisite tenderness that she was silenced. He went down on one knee, and putting his arms about her, pressed his face against her knees. “ I love you,” he

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murmured, "I love you. Stay with me always. Oh, my love, my love, stay with me always! "

She spoke sharply, breathlessly, as if she were afraid, but afraid of herself, not of him:

"Monsieur Denon, please! Please! You have no right——"

"No, I have no right, I know it. But I love you, and love gives me at least the courage to tell you how I adore you! Do not draw away from me. Touch my hair! Yes, lay your hands on my head. That is like a blessing. I love you so much that I wish I were your child, your son."

"Edouard!" The name came naturally enough to her lips. "Come! This is folly. Do not make me angry."

"Angry? Why should you be angry, you whom I worship?"

"Because you must not behave so. Please! It is time for me to go."

He stood up, but did not release her.

"I have told you," he murmured, "that I love you as a child loves its mother. That is so. But also I love you as a man loves a woman. Elizabeth! Those lips can say such cruel, sensible things. I must silence them for one moment." And he gathered her to him with great strength and kissed her mouth, a long kiss that took away her breath and made her tremble. She put both hands against his breast and tried to push him from her.

"That is enough! It is too much. I am angry with you."

He stared into her face with the rapt, deep look of a lover, stared down and down into her eyes.

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"You love me a little. Do you know that? No? Then I will tell you so. Already you love me just a little. Will you let it grow, or will you kill it? Listen, I love you, wholly, in every way. I would like to devote my whole life to you. Do you understand? Will you marry me? It might not be so foolish as you think. It might be wisdom, to marry me. It might mean happiness, for both of us. I believe I could make you very happy, because I could love you as you ought to be loved."

Still pushing him away, she said, "I do not want either a lover or a husband. I only want you to be my friend."

He continued to look down into her face with a passionate fondness, a passionate tenderness.

"What will become of you, Elizabeth? You don't know how often I ask myself that question. What will become of you if I let you go?"

"I am quite happy," she said, in her most matter-of-fact tones. "Why trouble about me? But for lack of money I assure you I am entirely happy."

"Yes, that is the sort of thing you like to say, but it is not true. You cannot live without love, you cannot. You will become hard, like ice—no, for that melts—like a diamond. You will become more and more unhappy, and in time, more and more lonely. Would life with me be so little to your taste? I would give you everything I have to give—a whole life-time of devotion. If you wish"—he smiled as he said it—"I will even be ambitious!"

"No, no! Please! It is folly to talk of it." She freed herself, or he let her go. "I value my freedom. I shall never marry again; no, I shall certainly never

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marry again. And as for a lover, you know my views about that."

"I have not asked you to be my mistress."

She moved away from him, and took up her gloves and bag. "I am sorry this has happened," she said. "It is Lady Morgan's fault. I cannot imagine what has kept her. But I won't wait for her any longer. My cloak—there it is. Come, forget this folly and let us be friends again."

She had regained her cool dignity and self-control. She threw her wrap over her arm and went towards the door, while he watched her with eyes in which love and pain and sorrow were mingled.

"Wait," he said. "Think for a moment. You need not hurry away. You are in no danger. Think! Are you so sure that you can live—I won't say without *my* love, though that is not to be despised—but without love at all? What will become of you? What will your life be? Young as you are, beautiful as you are, what will your life be without love? Have you never thought?"

"I have my son."

"And some day he will turn from you to another."

"So might a husband. It has happened once. Why burn one's fingers a second time?"

"If you would give me the right to love you, that would never happen. It is not wholly selfishness, Elizabeth, I am not thinking only of myself, though I adore you! I am thinking also of you. I see so sad and lonely a future for you, if you deny yourself love!"

"That is a risk I must take."

"Some day you will really be as hard as it now pleases you to pretend you are."

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"The sooner the better," she retorted. "Life will become far simpler. But I assure you, I already know what I want. If only I had fifty thousand francs a year, I would be as happy as a woman can be. That is the truth. So you see, you do not know me. I want to be free, and only money can give freedom. Don't look at me like that. It is the truth. How old are you? Twenty-six? And I am thirty. At twenty-six, a man does not love for ever, and at thirty, a sensible woman has done with love. That is something for young girls to dream about. Now I must really go. Good-bye.' She held out her hand. "I must go home and dress for an evening party at the Suards'. Shall you be there?"

He stood quite still, watching her with eyes that at this moment looked deeply, intensely blue, but he did not give her his hand.

"Promise me," he said, "that you will never talk to your son as you have talked to me."

"Why not?"

"Why not? Because some day he may learn to hate you. Or if he does not hate you, he may become a rogue or a fortune-hunter or a coxcomb."

"He may be a fortune-hunter if he chooses," she said lightly, "provided he is neither a rogue nor a coxcomb. As for hating me, he will certainly never do that."

"Good-bye," he said. And striding to the door he flung it wide open.

"You are not coming down to the street with me?"

"There is no need. You will easily find a fiacre. Neither will I be at the Suards'. It is better that we should not meet again."

"That is as you please." She went to the door, throwing her cloak about her shoulders. She did not

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look at him again. He followed her, two or three steps only, and then stopped.

"The truth is," he said, bitterly, "that you did not suffer enough, that you have never suffered at all. True suffering would have made a woman of you. Only your pride has been hurt. Nothing else. I see that now."

"Good-bye," she said. "If you do not mean to find a carriage for me, please do not come farther. It is unnecessary. If Lady Morgan comes, tell her, please, that I have gone home." She said no more, but ran down the stairs, the lilacs in her big hat nodding as she went. He watched her go, then closed the door and flung himself on his couch. His head was aching violently—it was always so when he was mentally disturbed, and now his mind was in a state of utter chaos. He had offended, perhaps insulted the woman he loved. She would never see him again. He had been a fool to believe, even for one moment, that she had meant what she said. She had been so badly hurt that the concealment of her true feelings had become second nature to her. It would take time to change all that. He must be patient. He had been a fool, and had risked losing the very thing he now held most dear in life. Should he dress and go to the Suard's, and see her and beg her forgiveness?

"Oh, my beloved!" he cried aloud, his face buried in his hands. "Oh, my beloved, I must, I must believe you worthy of love, for I will love you all my life!"

Lady Morgan was full of apologies when she saw Elizabeth that night at the Suard's—that pair of elderly intellectuals whose large parties the more serious-minded society of Paris so gladly attended. She had been urged

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by her hostess and, indeed, everyone at her *déjeuner-à-la-fourchette*, she explained, to go with the rest of the party to the fortress of Vincennes, to see the spot where the Duc d'Enghien had met his death.

"That was a gloomy bit of history I could not deny myself," said Lady Morgan. "There was hardly a dry eye, and *quant à moi*, I was quite ready to burst into tears, but as I had to make notes for my book I could not permit myself that luxury. I do hope my absence made no difference to you, and that you will forgive me. Certainly that charming young Denon ought to be most grateful to me for not turning up!"

"It was very wrong of you," Elizabeth said, with her brief smile, "but I am far too fond of you not to forgive you."

One day, at about this time, she received a letter from Mary, written from England, and full of the pleasures she was experiencing there. She and Robert were visiting Thomas Coke, at Holkham, in Norfolk, while Elizabeth and Louisa, chaperoned by the wife of the American Minister, remained in London.

This is the most lovely place [wrote Mary] that I ever saw in all my life, and our host is nothing less than an angel. He cannot do enough for us and vows himself my slave for life, which is charming, considering that we only met him ten days ago. When we leave here we go to London to join Eliza and Louisa and to make our bows at Court. We hear that the Duke of Wellington is to be there—just for a few days, as he cannot longer be spared from Paris. I long to meet him! Robert tells me he is already quite jealous, and well he may be, of

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the greatest hero of our time! I can hardly wait, as you can imagine, to make his acquaintance. The Duchess we have already met, and we found her most charming and most cordial, and, of course, as simple as possible. I can scarcely believe that I am really in Europe at last! It is too much happiness!

It was quite true, the Duke told her, when she saw him that evening at Madame de Staël's, he was about to go to London, and he was eager to meet the three lovely American ladies whose charms had already been so warmly praised by his wife.

"Give my love," Elizabeth said, hiding the pang she felt, "to my sisters-in-law, please, and tell my brother, if you will, that I look forward greatly to seeing him here."

To England the Duke went, and there began, for Mary Patterson, a friendship with him such as Elizabeth had vainly longed for. Mary possessed all the qualities that most charmed him in women; she was immediately friendly, talkative, impulsive and lovely. Even Lord Byron was moved, almost to ecstasy—it was she he had in mind when he wrote: "The might, the majesty of loveliness . . ."—and the Prince Regent to blunt and outspoken approval. In fact London took the three American beauties to its heart, and on hearing of these successes, Elizabeth's pride received a hurt such as it had not received for eleven years. "I have been through too much," she thought, hearing of their triumphs, "I have been dimmed and disillusioned. These three will be bound to interest and attract all who meet them. Everything will be fresh and novel to

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them, as they are fresh and novel to everyone. And above all, they need not consider money."

There was the rub! And there, she hoped, was the explanation. While she was forced to ponder carefully the spending of every penny, the Catons had money to throw away. Robert received a substantial allowance from his father—who, from the very beginning, had thoroughly approved of the match—and Mary had brought him a handsome dowry. As for the other two, they were, of course, very well provided for. She made up her mind not to remain in Paris more than a few days after they had arrived there. "For if I am away in Geneva, people will not be able to make comparisons that might be unfavourable to me." She felt that she possessed one advantage over them, and one only—the name of Bonaparte. It was hardly the moment for young Denon, or anyone else, to invite her to relinquish it!

But more disturbing even than the rumours of these triumphs, was the news that presently reached her from Robert, in Brussels. They had suddenly decided, he wrote, to pay a visit to Belgium with the Duke, who had invited them to accompany him to the battleground of Waterloo on the first anniversary of that great day.

We count it a great honour and privilege [wrote Robert] to have been taken there by the Duke himself. It was a most affecting and memorable experience, and he himself was very greatly moved—even more so, I think, than he had anticipated. He explained to us the disposition of the different forces, and you may imagine how interesting it

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was to hear from his own lips how the battle was fought. We returned to Brussels—a pleasant enough city—to-day, and will be in Paris within the week. I need hardly tell you how much I look forward—as we all do—to seeing you.

Your affectionate brother,

ROBERT PATTERSON.

PS.—Mary and the Duke have become the best of friends; indeed he seems to admire her enormously. As for Elizabeth and Louisa, he vows he will find husbands for both of them, and now they never meet a man in his presence but they ask, as soon as he is gone, “Will he do? Which one of us is to marry him?” which seems to amuse him very much.

Such a stab went through Elizabeth’s heart when she read this letter that she really believed she would faint. Fate, she thought, could scarcely have found a more brutal trick to play on her. It had already sufficiently wounded her vanity that her charms had made so little impression on the Duke. Now she would have to endure witnessing the success of her own sister-in-law. It was bitter, bitter.

She had to admit to herself that she would have given almost anything to have been in Mary’s place. To be singled out by him, to have been made the object of such a conspicuous, such a notable attention! It would have been something to remember all one’s life; to have walked beside that splendid, military figure, to have heard that voice say: “Here were the Inniskillings, here Colville’s men, there Lord Hill’s . . . !” And

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that unique privilege had fallen to pretty, gay, chattering Mary and her sisters, whom she thought she had left behind her in Baltimore for ever. Never before had she felt so acutely, so violently, the pains of envy. And Mrs. Caton—what a triumph for her! How delighted she would be to tell her friends in Baltimore of the successes of her daughters in Europe—successes that up to now had been Elizabeth's alone.

Only a few weeks ago she had written to her father:

"I went last night to a dinner and ball given by the Duke of Wellington. He paid me the most flattering attention." An empty little triumph it seemed to her now. Dozens of women were asked to his house; he danced and talked with them all. But he had chosen to take Mary, Louisa and Elizabeth over the battle-field of Waterloo.

It made her impatient of young Denon and his adoration. "You really must not call here so often," she said to him, "you will make me talked about." She felt ill, wretched, and presently took to her bed and would see no one but Lady Morgan. It was a return, she said, of her old trouble. But she could not put the Duke's preference for Mary out of her mind. "He didn't like me," she thought. "I wonder why? Am I too reticent, too reserved? Is it true that I succeed better with Frenchmen than with Englishmen?" When, in spite of her warning, young Denon called again with flowers for her, she said to Lady Morgan, "I hope he is not going to be a nuisance."

"Why don't you leave Paris?" Lady Morgan asked. "It is really growing too hot for comfort. I'm convinced you need a change."

Elizabeth said that she was going to spend a few

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days with her father's friend, the Marquis de Lafayette at his château, La Grange, and was then planning to go on to Geneva. "But I don't feel strong enough yet to undertake the journey. I must have a few days' more rest and quiet."

"You should let the doctor bleed you. It's the only thing. Why not see Charles? I'm sure he would prescribe it."

But Elizabeth refused to be bled.

Two days later, Robert, Mary and her two sisters arrived in Paris, and instead of taking furnished rooms, accepted the Duke's invitation to spend their time at his house, as his guests. They called at once to see Elizabeth, who got out of her bed and dressed herself in her best to receive them. They seemed, the three lively, high-spirited young women, to fill her rooms to overflowing with their beautiful gowns and ribbons and laces, and their animation. Mary, Elizabeth thought, had never looked more lovely. It was a hot day, and she was dressed in *écru*-coloured organdie with sleeves of white tulle, and about her shoulders was a tulle scarf of palest rose. She wore a large, simple straw hat—trimmed with ribbons of the same rose colour—well on the back of her head, and over it was draped a veil of blonde lace. Through it her complexion looked dazzling. She tossed it back to kiss Elizabeth, and there was such beauty and grace in her every gesture that Elizabeth had to harden her heart against her. All three were charmingly and fashionably gowned—"Why not, when they can afford to go to the best dressmakers?"—even their stockings, she observed, were of the finest and laciest *fil d'Écosse* that she had ever seen. Both Louisa and Elizabeth Caton wore blue

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and looked as fresh as flowers. No wonder they had caused a furore in London; together the effect of the three was overwhelming. They chattered and laughed and teased one another and Robert, and interrupted one another's stories in the most good-natured way in the world, but Elizabeth felt herself growing colder and colder towards them. They sang the Duke's praises until she could have put her hands over her ears and rushed from the room. ("Poor Robert!" she thought. "He has to put up with this day after day!")

"The Duke is *adorable*," said Mary, "and he has been kinder to us than words can say. And Louisa, be it known, has captured the heart of his aide-de-camp, Sir Felton Bathurst Hervey. It was the most instantaneous of conquests. One look at Louisa, and 'Crash!' he had fallen in love. One could almost hear it—one could certainly see it. A dear creature he is, too, and we all hope something comes of it. I'm sure I couldn't imagine a more delightful brother-in-law."

"He hasn't asked to be your brother-in-law yet," said Louisa, quite unembarrassed. "Let us wait with what patience we may until he does."

Certainly they were three most formidable rivals, the more so, perhaps, in that they were totally unconscious of any competition. Robert, it appeared, took it all very calmly and was quite unmoved by the success of his wife and sisters-in-law. It was no more, perhaps, than he had anticipated. He had not lost his ease of manner and quiet dignity, but it distressed Elizabeth to see how entirely he seemed to belong, now, to the Caton family.

She was sick of Paris, she told them, everyone of any importance would be out of it soon, and she

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would be glad to get away to the wooded districts of La Brie, where the Marquis de Lafayette's château was.

"But it will be very dull there, surely," cried Elizabeth Caton. "When we leave Paris we will go back to England for a round of country house visits. It will be the greatest fun."

"I've had all the gaiety I can endure for a while," said Elizabeth. "I am quite worn out with late nights, and when I get to Geneva I dare say it will all begin again."

The next time they came, young Denon was at her door with some flowers, and they teased her about her handsome admirer. She fancied there was some condescension in their teasing, and it made her feel still more displeased with the young man's attentions. She said she really did not know how to get rid of him.

"How romantic!" cried Louisa. "Who is he? What is he? He had the bluest eyes in the world, and what a leg! I thought him charming."

On the day before she was ready to leave for La Grange, while she and Fanchette, her maid, were finishing the packing of her boxes, Denon called once more, and pushing past Fanchette, found himself in Elizabeth's bedroom. He was in a highly excited and overwrought state, and looked as though he had not slept for many nights. His appearance in her room was so totally unexpected that Elizabeth gave a little cry, and said:

"Monsieur Denon! I must ask you to leave my room at once. What are you thinking of, to force your way in like this?"

"I must see you," he answered, almost violently, "I

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had to see you. You are going to-morrow. Would you have gone without a word? How could you? It seems incredible, when I——”

“My dear young man,” said Elizabeth, a little tartly, “I am going no farther than La Brie, and then, after a few days, to Geneva. Neither place is at the end of the world, and I am probably returning here again in August, on my way back to America.”

“To America?” His pallor was quite frightening. “You have really made up your mind to go back to America? Why? Why?”

“For a while, yes. I want to see my son. My brother and his wife are returning then, and it seems sensible for us all to go back together.”

“Elizabeth! You speak as if it were only a few hours away! Shall I ever see you again? This is torture. Good God! What misery to love as I love, and to love *you*! Have you no heart? Is there no hope? I thought that to love you was the greatest happiness I could ever know, but now it is all turned to pain and grief and wretchedness. Tell me that you will not go, that it is not true!”

She was put out and annoyed that he had forced himself into her room in this fashion, for she was wearing an old negligée, and was not prepared for visitors. She was not, therefore, disposed to be kind, and besides, his appearance was almost alarming. “You must wait in the salon,” she said, “if you wish to talk to me. I am busy now, also, as you see, I am not dressed. I was not expecting you.”

“I am not a visitor,” he cried, “I am your friend, your lover. What does it matter to me how you look? To see you like this, intimately—to see your room—it

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is happiness, and it is torture. Let me stay. Let me stay. I won't touch you. Let me stay! "

"Impossible!" she said. "Fanchette would imagine—well, you know very well what she would imagine. I am not sufficiently modern to receive young men in my bedroom. You forget I am an American, after all."

He stepped over a box, overturning a pile of undergarments, and took her roughly into his arms.

"I love you. I cannot live without you. I have not slept for four nights. Look at me! Give me a little hope, my dearest, my dearest. I swear, I swear that I can make you happy! Do not go to America. Send for your son, I will love him as though he were my own. It will kill me if you go. I love you so completely, so deeply that life is nothing to me without you."

She struggled with him, twisted and turned her head to avoid his kisses, put her hands over his mouth. "No, no! Let me go." This ardour—it was akin to frenzy—frightened her. "I will call Fanchette. Let me go! "

He still held her. "Do you know what you have done to me? I cannot sleep. I want no food. I think of nothing but you. Elizabeth, take pity—no, I don't want your pity—love me, love me even a little—give me the right to make you happy as I could make you happy. Oh, love me, love me! "

She pushed hard with both hands against his breast. "Let me go. Really, this is too much. I do not love you. I can never love you. This is absurd. Monsieur Denon, come to your senses! You are outrageous. Please go! I do not wish to see you again! "

He suddenly released her, so suddenly that she fell back against the bed. He looked wild, distraught, un-

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like himself. "Fanchette!" she cried. "Fanchette! Come here!" But he went quickly to the door and leaned against it.

"You have no need to call your maid. You know that. I am going at once. If you wish never to see me again, you shall not. Did you mean that? Am I dismissed? Tell me." His blue eyes blazed, his face was pale and glistening, for the afternoon was sultry. "Tell me. It is better that I should know."

"I think it would be best for us not to meet again for some time," she said, more gently. "I dislike such behaviour. Open the door, please, my maid wishes to come in."

He gave her a long, searching, unbearable look.

"I ought to have died," he said, very quietly, "at Quatre Bras. Good-bye."

She at once lost her momentary fear of him. She was sorry for him now. He was young, and he was unhappy because of her. She might have been even sorrier for him, but she herself was too humiliated and unhappy. The contrast between this young man, who had fought at Waterloo as a private soldier, and the great Duke himself was too great, and left a bitter taste in the mouth. She had no wish to cause suffering, but really this young man was quite absurd. He expected altogether too much.

"Good-bye," she said. "Later, perhaps, we may meet again as friends." She held out her hand, but he merely continued to look at her, without moving. And in that instant it flashed across her mind that he knew her through and through; that words were useless because he saw all that she was, and all that she felt. It was as if he now completely understood her in one

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clear, vivid moment; understood and accepted and forgave. He smiled, shook his head, opened the door and went out, closing it behind him. Fanchette appeared almost at once, showing a frightened face.

"It is all right, Fanchette," she said. "I called because I wanted you to fetch me something from the salon, but it does not matter now. We must finish our packing. Leave out two pairs of gloves for the journey, and please sew the bow more securely on this hat. It is ready to come off."

It would be good to be away from Paris, away from that insistent young man, and troubling thoughts; away from the jealousy from which she was suffering, though she tried to persuade herself, without much success, that it was not jealousy at all but merely disapproval of her sister-in-law's behaviour. And in Geneva, Prince Demidoff was patiently waiting. There was some balm in the thought.

She did not hear until some weeks later, when a letter came from Lady Mórigan, that young Denon had left Paris, quite suddenly.

No one knows where he has gone [Lady Morgan said], not even his uncle, though no doubt he will hear in due course. The old gentleman thinks it is merely in pursuit of some love affair, and wishes him joy, but I fancy you and I know better. He has gone away to hide his unhappiness from prying eyes. At least that is my view of the matter, but I will say no more for fear it may distress you to hear of it. Changing the subject, Charles and I are returning to England almost at once. I hope to finish my book on France before the autumn.

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Is it true that the lovely Miss Louisa Caton is engaged to Sir Felton Bathurst Hervey? He is certainly a most desirable *parti*. The Duke's aide-de-camp, and an excellent family besides.

It was true. Elizabeth had just received a letter from Mary telling her so.

Dear Lou is so happy [she wrote]. Really it is a joy to see her. And he is a darling. We are having a truly heavenly time here, everyone is too kind.

On her way through Paris in August, Elizabeth spent several nights with the Gallatins. Mr. Gallatin was American Minister to France now, and Mrs. Gallatin and his daughter Frances were with him. They had taken a house that had once belonged to General Moreau of Hohenlinden fame, who was now an exile in America, and James had made all the arrangements and engaged all the servants, as Mrs. Gallatin could speak almost no French. Elizabeth's boxes quite filled the antechamber, a fact which James recorded in his diary with some amusement, but he was glad to see her, and showed her with pride his smart new cabriolet, in which he drove about Paris. He was a young man of fashion now, and was already involved in one or two affairs with married women. Certainly he had lost none of his charm. Mr. Gallatin told Elizabeth one night that the King regretted very much her decision not to come to his Court, but that he perfectly understood her reasons. Elizabeth, in a somewhat caustic and bitter mood, remarked:

"That Corsican blackguard would not have been so gracious," then immediately regretted the words, for it

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was not her habit to speak ill of Napoleon. "That is not for your diary, James," she said, turning to him. But he put it in just the same.

Paris was "empty" now. James, to amuse their guest, took her into the Champs-Élysées and tried to persuade her to mount a wooden horse and take a turn at the *jeu de bague*, but she would not. So he and Frances, who accompanied them, got on the *carrousel* as gaily as two children, and as the chairs and horses revolved to the tinkling music, won sticks of sugar candy by catching at rings with little rods. "I don't suppose you were ever young enough to do this," said James when they presently returned to her.

"You forget," she said, "I was the eldest daughter of a large family."

One warm night she and James dined at a *Pavillon* in the Champs-Élysées, surrounded by a garden hung with lanterns. It was not the sort of evening she was accustomed to spend in Paris, but she enjoyed it, none the less. She listened to James's accounts of his love affairs—no names, of course, were mentioned, for James was a man of the world.

"I hope to heaven Bo will not resemble you in that respect," she said. "I mean to marry him very young, probably to his cousin Charlotte, the daughter of Joseph Bonaparte. I have quite set my heart on it, in fact."

James was much amused. "How funny you are!" he said. "He's still only a fat little boy of eleven."

But her thoughts continued to dwell upon it, and the more she considered it the more she was convinced that there was no other way in the world by which she could so successfully advance Bo's fortunes. The Bonapartes, various people had assured her, wished to marry

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their children to Bonapartes, and she suspected that a time would come when they would show an interest in Bo. She greatly looked forward to that day.

Robert, with Mary and his sisters-in-law, was now staying at the Duke's country house, Stratfield Saye. He wrote to Elizabeth from there to ask her if she had made her plans to return to America with them. But she felt less and less inclined to do so. Four successful and interesting Baltimore beauties in one family, were, she considered, far too many, and she wished to be as independent of the others as she could. Let Robert, Mary and Elizabeth—for Louisa would remain in England—go back without her. She would stay in Europe a little longer. From the accounts she received from Miss Spear and her father, Bo was doing very well at school, so she need not concern herself about his welfare. She had half promised to pay Lady Morgan a visit in London in the autumn, and Paris, the next winter, promised to be as gay as it had been the winter before. And American winters were tedious and bad for her health. She would stay, at least, until the spring.

There were times when she missed young Denon. If only, if only he had been other than he was! She made no inquiries for him, and presumed that he was still abroad. It did not concern her now. That episode was better closed.

Two notes were brought to her one day; one from Mrs. Gallatin to say that a cover was always laid for her at their table, and one from Madame de Staël, asking her to a soirée. Both pleased her. Paris, it seemed, was beginning to stir after its summer sleep. The *beau monde* was returning.

CHAPTER XIII

AMERICA, Elizabeth thought, had not improved during her absence, and even if it had it is doubtful if she would have admitted it, even to herself. She returned reluctantly, only a sense of duty and a longing to see her child driving her back into that "obscurity" she so hated. Bo, at least, showed improvement. He was a fine, handsome boy, bearing a certain resemblance, it was true, to his father, but with far more candour and character in his face. She thought he only lacked polish and the ability to express himself easily and fluently in either his own or any other tongue. Such refinements as these were not to be acquired, she believed, in America, and she had barely been in his company an hour before she made up her mind to take him abroad as soon as he had reached his fourteenth year.

Meanwhile, America must be endured. Her father showed no signs of growing old, but was as active as ever, no civic function in Baltimore seeming to be complete without him. He received her with affection tempered by disapproval, and though he could not resist a certain amount of ironic and unfavourable comment, was glad, nevertheless, to have her back.

Mary Patterson, since her success in England and France, and particularly since her conspicuous success with the Duke and with Lord Byron (to mention only two of her admirers), was, Elizabeth considered, greatly changed for the worse, though no one, Robert least of all, appeared to notice it. On every side Elizabeth

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heard her praises sung and her beauty extolled until she found it quite impossible to be more than civil to her. In fact she was on really friendly terms now only with Mrs. Caton, who, with the passing of the years, grew more and more mellow, handsome and distinguished.

"I admire your grace and manner more than ever, since my *entrée* into the *beau monde* of Europe," Elizabeth told her, "for I am better able to appreciate them."

For two years she marked time, keeping up a busy correspondence with a great many people in Europe, but chiefly with Lady Morgan, Prince Demidoff and the Gallatin family, who were still in Paris. To Lady Morgan she sent the pleasing information that her book on France had gone into three editions in America. "I can assure you," she told her, "that your reputation here is as familiar and as great as in Europe, where you are justly admired." A great part of each letter to Lady Morgan was given up to self-pity. In one she said, "I wish I could see you and listen to you once more; but this, like all my desires, must be disappointed. and I am condemned to vegetate for ever in a country where I am not happy. My son is very intelligent and very good and very handsome—all these advantages add to the regret I feel at the destiny which compels me to lose life in this region of *ennui*. You have a great deal of imagination, but it can give you no idea of the mode of existence inflicted on us. . . . You are very happy in every respect, too much so to conceive what I suffer here." And later: "I embroider and read, *pour me défaire de mon temps*—they are the only distractions left to me."

But the time was passing, nevertheless, and what was

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to be done with Bo? To allow him to grow up in America as a simple American citizen was not to be thought of.

"You are different in birth, breeding and intelligence, different in every way, in fact, from these boys here," she said once when she went to Emmotsburg to see him.

He opened his eyes very wide, for he felt no different.

"Am I?" he asked. "Why? How?"

"Because you are a Bonaparte."

"But everyone must be someone. Why does being a Bonaparte make me different?"

"My dear Bo, you know very well. Because your uncle, Napoleon, was the greatest man of our time—perhaps of all time. He was Emperor of half the world, and you have his blood in your veins."

"But that was a long time ago," the boy said. "Now he's just shut up on an island."

"That makes no difference. He will be one of the great men of history."

"I'm afraid I don't like history very much," said her son. "I get very bored with battles, battles, battles all the time. Battles and dates. I hate them both."

"That's because history is taught so badly here. When I take you abroad to study——"

"Must we go abroad, mamma? I should so like to stay here, if only you would stay too. And what would grandfather do without me?"

"Your grandfather doesn't need us. There are all your uncles to keep him company, and there's Miss Spear."

"Still, I should think he would miss me a good deal," Bo said.

"I'm thinking of *your* good, my son, not of your

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grandfather's. His life is behind him. Yours is ahead of you."

"Well," said the boy, "I expect you know best."

But his friends, his games, his holidays at Homewood, at Springfield or in South Street, the company of his uncles, and, best of all, the company of his grandfather grew increasingly dear to him, for he knew that the time would come when he must leave them all behind him.

He was an affectionate boy, with the most loyal feelings. Loyalty to his mother he conceived to be his first duty, and he schooled himself very early to place her wishes and her good before his own. Mamma was very beautiful and very unfortunate, and she was to be assisted and protected in every possible way. She had been so hurt and humiliated that even if he were to give up his whole life to her he could never, he considered, make up to her for what she had suffered. She was the cleverest lady, probably, in all America, with her perfect manners and her knowledge of the world, and she knew as much about business, almost, as his grandfather. He admired and respected her enormously. When she was melancholy his heart was deeply troubled, when she gave way to self-pity he felt that it was his whole duty to be her stay and comforter, and he suffered in sympathy with her; though when they were apart he quickly forgot these sorrows, for he was young and happy.

Again and again, now, she told him that she had no longer any inclination to undertake the journey to Europe, and that if she did undertake it, it would be solely on his account.

"I am quite reconciled, myself, to my *fautewil*, and

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my reading," she assured him, "and although I feel nothing but ennui here, I would prefer it to the strain of going abroad. But it is impossible, in this country, to give you the education your rank demands. If only I knew someone in Edinburgh or Dublin to whom I could safely confide you, I would send you there, but as I do not, I must accompany you myself."

"I am quite ready to do whatever you think best," he said.

"Then we must go to Europe, but we must live with the greatest care and economy when we get there. My income now is only five thousand five hundred dollars a year, which, heavens knows, will not go far in Europe."

As Bo's fourteenth birthday drew near, dread filled Mr. Patterson's heart. He couldn't stop her; she was determined to take the boy to Europe, in spite of anything he could say, and she'd fill his now sensible head with rubbish about titles, and with nonsensical ideas. Bo, his darling grandson, with whom he was on such happy, affectionate terms! There was something, he felt, very special and very close between them; it was as if both of them had silently, tacitly allied themselves against a common threat to their peace and their happiness, and had resolved to comfort each other, knowing that the time of danger was not far off. But now that Betsy was back, the old man said to himself, she had, of course, won the boy over completely. She was his mother, it was bound to be so, and he wasn't going to try to come between mother and son. If they wanted his advice, they should have it, but he didn't intend to interfere.

At least she was intensely proud of Bo, a fact which

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warmed Mr. Patterson's heart. (If only he could be certain that she was proud of his character, and not merely of his good looks and his charm!) It was his opinion, expressed more than once, and very forcibly, that Bo would be unhappy in Europe, and would be thankful to come home again. For Europe, he considered, was no place for an American child, and he more than half suspected that children were debauched there with late hours, highly spiced foods, and very likely worse!

There was a good deal of truth in Elizabeth's assertions that she was going to Europe again for the sake of her son. She put down much of Mary's success abroad to the fact that she was a young married woman companioned by an interesting and charming husband, and to the fact, moreover, that she was exceedingly rich. Neither of these things, alas! was true of herself. She had to be economical, she had to make her way as best she could without help or protection. And the position of a woman alone, and particularly of a beautiful and celebrated woman, was, to say the least, difficult and ambiguous. Even Madame de Staël had found it more convenient to have a second husband. Her recent death was a real blow to Elizabeth. So brilliant, so alive, so beloved, her illness and decline seemed tragically premature. To die when one was at the height of one's fame, when one still had a whole host of well-known men and women for intimate friends and admirers, was sad, sad! To return to Geneva now, as she expected to do, and find Coppet closed and deserted, was a great sorrow, for she had longed to visit it again with Bo.

Well, she told herself, as one grows older one must

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be prepared to endure a succession of such sorrows.

They sailed on May 1st, 1819. Bo, like any other boy, found the clipper a source of great delight. He already knew a good deal about ships, for he was well acquainted with his grandfather's, but he had never before, since he was a baby, taken a long voyage on one. And long this voyage most emphatically was, exhausting even his mother's patience and philosophy, for it was seven weeks before land was sighted. By that time he was on the best possible terms with the Captain and most of the sailors, who adored him. As for the half-dozen other passengers, they admired him extremely, and if this admiration, Elizabeth said to herself, were an indication of the admiration he was about to receive in Europe, she would have to take care that his head was not turned.

They landed at Amsterdam—what memories that harbour evoked!—and as soon as they could make arrangements for a coach at a not too exorbitant price, they set out for Geneva, but had to make a detour avoiding France, as the French chargé d'affaires in Amsterdam refused to give Bo a permit to travel through that country because of his resemblance to Napoleon.

"It's extremely inconvenient," said Elizabeth to Bo, "but I can't help feeling pleased and proud."

Bo was enchanted with the mountains, the like of which he had never before seen or imagined. In fact all the sights and circumstances of the journey pleased him enormously, and he said to himself that so far, Europe was far exceeding his expectations. He wrote long, enthusiastic letters to his grandfather, letters which troubled the old man so much that he would

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turn hastily to the end, where Bo would always be sure to say that, interesting and exciting though Europe was, he was homesick for America and for his grandfather.

Once in Geneva again, Elizabeth felt happier and younger than for some time past. Her old friends were delighted to welcome her back. Prince Demidoff was unchanged, except that his hair had receded still further from his polished crown; he still kept open house, and made vast gifts to charity. Princess Potemkin and Princess Galitzin were as fond of her as ever, and Bo made great friends with little Katinka Galitzin, who was just a year or so younger than himself. They all gave Elizabeth advice about Bo, but the choice of a school for him was taken out of her hands by M. de Bonstettin, Madame de Staël's old friend, who selected a school of the first quality just outside the town. There Bo was placed, as a boarder, and Elizabeth meanwhile went to visit Princess Galitzin in her country house not more than a mile away.

But this arrangement, though agreeable, could not be permanent, and at the end of two months, Elizabeth sought and found a boarding-house in Geneva. It already housed an interesting compatriot, no other than the richest man in America, the widowed Mr. John Jacob Astor. He had with him a boy whom he also wished to send to school in Switzerland, and a plain young daughter whose education he wished to have "finished" abroad.

Elizabeth and Mr. Astor came together like two bubbles on a glass of water. They were, in many ways, curiously alike and understood each other perfectly, and although Mr. Astor's manners, especially his table

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manners, were atrocious—he ate with his knife, wiped his fingers on the table-cloth and ejected unwanted food from his mouth in the frankest possible fashion—he was, nevertheless, a man of acute intelligence, goodwill, and vast wealth, and he immediately interested himself in both her and her son.

“Surely,” he said to her one day, “the boy’s father does something for him? Makes an allowance, or pays for his education?”

“He doesn’t contribute one single penny to his support,” she said. “Not one penny. Out of all the sums that have passed through his hands, he has never even repaid my father what he owed him. He is both the most extravagant and—where his duty is concerned—the meanest of men.”

Mr. Astor thought it disgraceful, and warmed Elizabeth’s heart by his sympathy. Children should be provided for; settlements should be made; responsibilities, once incurred, should be accepted. But there were many other members of the family. Could they not be persuaded to do something? He had followed events pretty closely, and he knew a good deal about the Bonapartes and their financial affairs, for it was a subject that interested him greatly.

“If his father will do nothing for him,” he said, “then his aunts or uncles perhaps will. I fancy the least wealthy is the boy’s father, but they have all owned palaces, and works of art, famous paintings and jewels, to say nothing of stocks and bonds, many of which they must have sold very advantageously. Madame Mère, of course, is the richest of them all, but she is continually being called on when any member of the family finds himself or herself in difficulties.

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Besides these 'gifts' I hear that she makes each one of her sons an allowance of twelve thousand dollars a year. She shares a palazzo with her brother, Cardinal Fesch, who is also extremely well off. I doubt," added Mr. Astor, "if he knows how rich he is." As for Pauline Borghese, though wildly extravagant, he said, she had a streak of caution somewhere in her make-up, and the eight hundred thousand francs given her by Napoleon at the time of her marriage to Borghese he believed had been carefully invested. "Besides," he said, "Borghese must give her something, even though they no longer live together, and he, I should say, is the wealthiest man in Italy."

All of which convinced Elizabeth that when the means to do so presented themselves, she ought to make Bo known to his Bonaparte relations.

These two discussed the matter exhaustively. Mr. Astor, in spite of his shocking table manners, was a man after her own heart. She respected his opinions and was glad to accept his advice. After a month spent under the same roof, their high opinion of each other was undimmed, and when he left Geneva to go to Rome, he promised to get in touch with Princess Borghese and sound her as to her feelings for her youngest brother's first wife and his eldest son.

It was months before this desired object was brought about, and Elizabeth heard nothing more of the matter until the following spring, when Mr. Astor wrote:

Last evening we had the honour of an introduction to the Princess Borghese, who immediately inquired after you and your son. When I informed her that I had left you in Geneva, she expressed

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much regret at your not having made the journey with us. She then said, "I am very happy to find an opportunity of speaking frankly to you. I wish very much to see Madame Patterson" [Elizabeth would have preferred the other name!] "and her son here. I have spoken to Mr. Russell and Commodore Stewart; both promised me to speak or write to Mrs. Patterson, but as yet I have no account of them or her. My object is to make some provision for the son of my brother, who is poor and can give him nothing. I am rich and have no child, and find in myself every disposition to do everything for him." She requested me to write to you without delay in her name, to invite you to make her a visit and to bring your son with you.

This, certainly, was hopeful and encouraging. "I am rich and have no child." Surely she would not have said this unless she really, seriously wished to do something for Bo. And why should she not? Her own son, little Dermid, the son of Le Clerc, would have been twenty-one years old if he had lived, and undoubtedly he would have been costing her at least twenty thousand francs a year. Why, then, should she not settle some such amount on Bo? It seemed quite probable that she would. Elizabeth had heard nothing at all from the two gentlemen, Mr. Russell and Commodore Stewart, and if they had written to her, their letters had gone astray. She made up her mind to write to Pauline at once—though not until she had given a good deal of thought to what she wished to say. It was as easy for her to write in French as in English, and after a few days, the following letter was dispatched to Rome:

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MADAME,

Mr. Astor wrote to me that, after he had the honour of being presented to your Highness, you had the goodness to ask about my son and myself, and said that you had at the same time expressed a desire to see us; without being thus assured of the interest you have deigned to show in us, I would not have taken the liberty of writing to you now.

The generous intentions with which Mr. Astor made me acquainted have filled me with gratitude, and add to the regret I feel that I have not had the honour to be personally acquainted with you. My object in coming to Geneva is to procure for my son a distinguished education such as he would not be able to find in America, and the simple kind of existence which will be in accord with the only future I can offer him. I have brought him up with the knowledge that I have no fortune to give him and that his place in the world will depend solely upon his own efforts. Convinced that one of the greatest misfortunes is to have pretensions without hopes, I have tried to remove any false ideas of ambition, and to encourage him in intellectual pursuits. Without perhaps possessing great talents, he is capable of arriving by his own efforts at an honourable station in society. So far I have nothing to complain of as to his application. My first desire, as it is my first duty, is to give him an excellent education and one suitable to his rank. I came here for that purpose and shall stay here to accomplish it. This will not prevent me from making a voyage to Italy a few months hence for the purpose of telling you, madame, how I am

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touched by the interest you have taken in my son, and of expressing to you my gratitude.

I would at the same time present my son but that I have decided not to interrupt his education. Personal merit is the only thing worthy of his name that I can leave him; that is why a good education is the first wish of my heart. Neither Mr. Russell nor Mr. Stewart has written to me. I imagine that they do not know of my departure from the United States.

And after the usual verbal flourishes, she ended the letter:

I have the honour to be your Highness's most humble and obedient servant,

ELIZABETH PATTERSON.

She sent a copy of this letter to her father, for she wished him to see for himself how right she had been to bring Bo to Europe; and at the same time told him what she knew or had heard of the Princess.

She is thirty-seven [actually she was thirty-nine, five years older than Elizabeth herself] and the handsomest woman in Europe of her age, excessively luxurious, consequently expensive in her habits, said to be extremely capricious in her attachments. The Bonapartes [she went on to say] are a sort of state prisoners who can only move with the permission of the sovereigns of Europe, and the wife of Joseph was recently refused permission to inhabit her château in Switzerland last summer. [Joseph himself, as the Count de Survilliers, was

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living in America.] She is perhaps [she wrote, referring to Pauline] sincere in her present intentions, but the fortune of a pretty woman of thirty-seven is a bad object of calculation for nephews. . . . I expect her answer to my letter, which will decide my departure. I shall remain three months near her.

But the Princess's health, it appeared, suffered a decline soon after meeting Mr. Astor and his daughter, and did not permit her to see them again. He wrote to Elizabeth once more, however, to say that the Princess had sent a friend to see him to inquire whether, in fact, it was true that the King of Westphalia did nothing at all for the boy; and Mr. Astor assured him that Jerome had not contributed one dollar towards his support. "My opinion is," he wrote, "that she feels an interest in your son. . . . I presume she would wish to have him, but I gave it as my opinion that at present you would not give him up to anyone."

This was less encouraging. However, the interest was there, and if Bo had been five years older she might have set out with him for Rome immediately. But he was making progress in his studies, and until she could be certain that the Princess really did mean to settle something on him, it was far better that he should stay where he was.

Now that she had found comfortable quarters in Geneva, Bo lived with her and attended school daily. Her friends asked him out a good deal in the evening when they asked her, and she was surprised to find that he was not at all shy, and could carry on a grown-up conversation, when it was required of him, with con-

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siderable *savoir-faire*. Indeed, he had plenty to say for himself, though he spoke modestly and only when spoken to. His French was now very fluent, as all his lessons were conducted in that language, and at the same time he was studying Greek, Latin, mathematics, history, mythology, geography, drawing, equitation, fencing and dancing. But that was not all. "Politeness, etc., *usage du monde*," Elizabeth told his grandfather, "are not lacking. He goes to a ball every Saturday evening" (they were given by Prince Demidoff), "where he meets some of the first persons in Europe."

As for her, she continued to live frugally, and her expenses in Geneva were only three thousand dollars a year. There was a financial depression in America, banks and businesses were closing down, and the value of everything she owned there had depreciated, so that it was more than ever necessary to be careful. A single servant attended to their wants, and their meals were provided by their landlady at a fixed monthly sum.

Meanwhile she continued to correspond with her friend Lady Morgan, and the authoress, who had visited the Princess Borghese the winter before, warned her against placing too much reliance on that lady's promises. Had it been Madame Mère who had made the inquiries, she said, it would have meant far more.

"The Bonapartes are all alike," Elizabeth, a little chagrined, wrote to her father; "very affectionate in words but without the least intention of parting with a farthing." And she added a bit of news that had come to her ears, "The Queen of Westphalia is lying-in of another child."

"Mamma goes out every night to a ball or party,"

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Bo wrote to Mr. Patterson; but all this, perhaps, was less gay than it sounded, for gaiety in Geneva was confined within the strictest limits. There was no dancing after midnight, and no one could leave the town after eleven at night without the chief magistrate's permission. In fact it was an ideal place to bring up a boy or educate a young man. But Bo, Mr. Patterson learnt with delight, had not lost his love for America. "Since I have been in Europe," the lad wrote, "I have dined with princes and princesses and all the great people of Europe, but I have not found a dish so much to my taste as the roast beef and beefsteaks I ate in South Street."

Interest in Bo was presently shown in another quarter. Joseph wrote to Elizabeth from his huge estate on the Delaware, offering her his château in Switzerland as a temporary residence while she was supervising her son's education, or, if the château were too large, he begged her to occupy any one of three country houses which belonged to him. But Elizabeth decided to accept none of them.

"They are all too far away from Geneva," she told Bo. "I should grow melancholy living so much alone, and besides, I cannot afford a carriage, which would be a necessity."

Shortly after this she received a letter from Jerome himself, which she opened without the smallest tremor of emotion. In it he explained why he had done nothing for his son, and told her that his fortune was not even sufficient for his present needs and those of his family. "You might have known me better," he said, with surprising candour, "than to imagine that I would ever think of laying aside a fortune." It had evidently reached his ears that she thought he ought

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to do something for their son. She paid no attention to the letter, and left it unanswered.

More than ever, since these communications from different members of the family, she was convinced that there was just one thing for Bo to do in order to secure his own future, and that was to marry Joseph's younger daughter, Charlotte. She spoke to him about her from time to time.

"I am quite sure she is a charming young girl, but we will wait a few years and see for ourselves what she is like. It would be an excellent thing, from their point of view, if she were to marry a member of the Bonaparte family. It wouldn't surprise me at all if they thought as well of the idea as I do. One cannot plan for these things too carefully, or too far ahead."

During the autumn of 1820 she had reason to think better of Jerome. His sister, Elisa Bacciochi, died, after a lingering illness, and Jerome, she heard, watched by her bedside day and night. He was fond of Elisa, she knew; their wills had never clashed, and she imagined that he was much grieved by her death.

Elisa was the first of the family to go; a fact commented upon by a lonely man on the island of St. Helena, who, when he heard the news, shut himself away in his room. "She has shown us the way," he was reported to have said. . . . "Death has taken Elisa, and I shall be the first to follow." Elizabeth heard of these words later in Geneva, and they seemed to her prophetic. And in the summer of 1821 they proved to have been so, for the news of Napoleon's death reached them one evening when they were at a dance given by Prince Demidoff; and the next day, all Bo's school-fellows treated him with marked respect and courtesy.

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"His uncle, Napoleon, has died at St. Helena," the boys said. "The great Napoleon is dead."

She and Bo had talked about it a great deal.

"I ought to have met him," she often said. "It was the greatest calamity of my life that I was not allowed to meet him. If I had, who knows how different our lives might have been? How different *everything* might have been?"

"But do we want things to be different?" asked Bo. He felt that he wanted for nothing in the world except his own horse to ride instead of having to hire one twice a week in Geneva.

"I don't think you realize," she said, "the hardships and difficulties I have had to encounter—and still have to encounter. Just to have met Napoleon would, I am convinced, have altered everything."

She was surprised to find how little Napoleon's death affected her, or the people about her. She supposed that he had been looked upon as dead ever since his abdication. It was a dead man who had touched at Plymouth that day on his way to St. Helena. But interest in the Bonaparte family sprang up again, and there was plenty of talk. Indeed for weeks it seemed as if there were no other topic in Geneva.

What would become of his son, the King of Rome, now called the Duke of Reichstadt? What would become of the sons of Louis and Hortense? The son of Jerome and Catherine? Would the Bonapartes be content to live in obscurity for ever? To pass out of history? Elizabeth wondered and speculated with the rest. Bo's future might or might not be a glorious one; that, she considered, would depend on his own efforts; but it was bound to be affected by the fate of the family.

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She was more than ever determined, now, to make him known to his relations.

At the end of October, in 1821, they set out together. Bo was in his seventeenth year, and had made great progress in his studies, and she thought she would be running no risk now in taking him into the hot-house atmosphere of Roman society. He could continue his studies there, particularly in Latin and Italian. Madame Mère's health was reported to be failing, and as far as the old lady was concerned, if they did not make the effort now, it might soon be too late.

It was a perilous and difficult journey. The roads through the mountains were covered with ice, and the horses continually slipped and struggled and fell. Once they had to spend a night on a high and narrow pass in a freezing wind, and without any protection other than that afforded by the coach itself, and Elizabeth caught a fearful cold, which lingered with her for some time, and alarmed her not a little, as it fell on her chest. But the Dome of St. Peter's was sighted at last, and they entered that city from which she hoped so much. The hotels, upon investigation, were all too expensive, so they took lodgings in a private house at ten guineas per month each. For some days they were unaware that Pauline, who had heard of their proposed visit, was making every effort to get in touch with them, and had sent notes to all the hotels in the hope of finding them. Thanks, finally, to an American lady who was acquainted with both, their whereabouts were made known to the Princess, who at once sent her carriage, with her lady-in-waiting, to fetch them to the palace.

As soon as she saw the Palazzo Borghese, Elizabeth could not but feel that here was immense, limitless

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wealth, and her hopes for Bo rose considerably higher. Such splendour she had rarely seen, and Bo's eyes expressed the astonishment that he felt when they drove into the great courtyard with its graceful columns and arches. "What a perfect setting for a lovely woman!" Elizabeth said, not without envy.

"You admire it?" said Madame d'Hautemesnil, the lady-in-waiting. "It is said to be the finest palazzo in Rome. The interior, as you will see, is really very fine. Everyone admires it extremely."

And well they might, the two visitors thought, but Bo made the private reservation that magnificent though it was, nothing on earth would ever induce him to live in such a place. As a piece of domestic architecture, intended to house a family, he thought it quite absurd, and as he went up the great staircase, the walls of which were hung with huge paintings of mythological subjects, he could hardly keep himself from laughing at the thought of what his grandfather would say of it, and he could imagine the old man in his plain blue coat and white drill trousers, stumping up the stairs in a perfect fury of republican disapproval.

They found Pauline lying on a couch in one of the great salons, dressed in an exquisite lace gown—*en demi-toilette*, but with bare arms and shoulders. It was a warm autumn day; Rome was shrouded in a delicate haze, through which the sun shone redly, and it touched the gold of Pauline's couch, which was drawn up close to a window, and made the diamonds on her hands and wrists sparkle brightly. She looked frail, fragile, but what perfection of figure and of feature! She did not get up when they came in, but half rose from her couch, gracefully extending both hands to

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Elizabeth, and giving Bo her cheek to kiss. She immediately thought, "What a handsome boy!" And of Elizabeth, "Is it true that we are alike? I am not at all displeased. She is very pretty, and has great style." It would have been, as Talleyrand had once said it might be, an amusing *rencontre*, but for the sadness that still hung about Pauline like a shadow, a sadness that was enhanced—and no doubt deliberately so—by her look of drooping frailty. Spoilt, over-sexed, passionate and self-willed little animal though she was, she could, and did, suffer at the death of the brother whom she had flouted and disobeyed, but whom she nevertheless sincerely loved. She was like a broken toy now, pathetic in her grief and loss. She, and all the rest, except Madame Mère, were like creatures left stranded on a beach after the tide has gone out; dimmed, inert, lifeless. Only Madame Mère really survived, a tragic, noble figure, but with sufficient strength of character to enable her to continue to exist fully, and in her own right, however sorrowfully.

But her interest in these new relations soon brightened Pauline's eye and brought animation into her face. She had, at the moment, no lover to comfort her, and she had been finding the days tedious, in spite of an endless succession of visitors.

It was Elizabeth's first meeting with a Bonaparte other than Jerome, and she was quick to observe little family traits, and to trace little likenesses between the brother and sister. Both had charming manners, and a way of speaking that was very gentle and even caressing; in Pauline, this was especially noticeable.

"I have longed to meet you," she said, in her light, prettily modulated voice. She had a way of drooping

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her head, as if she were very tired, and then suddenly looking up with a glance that was ravishingly sweet. "Ever since I first heard that you had married my little brother Jerome, I longed to meet you. *An American!* It was all so romantic and unexpected! I had not long been married to my little Le Clerc, and I was so perfectly happy myself that I rejoiced in the happiness of others. How long ago it all seems now! "

"How long ago it all is!" said Elizabeth, and indicating Bo, she said, "And here is the proof of it! I am delighted that what we hoped would happen, nearly three years ago, has happened at last, and we have all met. Bo has been most eager to see you."

"You are the only real aunt I have, Princess," said Bo, smiling. "At any rate, the only one I know."

"And I want to be a really good, useful aunt to you," said Pauline. "Indeed, I am determined to be, for what could be easier or more agreeable than to be a good indulgent aunt to such a charming young nephew? "

She inquired about their journey, expressed horror at their discomforts, and recommended her own doctor to cure Elizabeth's cough. "But you must take care of yourself," she said, when Elizabeth protested that she disliked doctors. "Health is all-important. I realize it more than ever, now that I have lost my own. Since my brother's death, I am more dead than alive. You see me looking my worst, for I have not had a good night, nor a happy hour, since that dreadful day. But we must not talk of sad things. You must meet *maman*, she will be much interested. She begs that you will call upon her soon. As for me, I hope you will come to see me every day."

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Her voice was clear, gentle, flute-like. Words came from her lips as sweetly and clearly as notes come from a bird. It was easy to imagine how she spoke to her lovers, for she was not one of those women whose tender or passionate moments it is difficult to conjure up. As she spoke and looked now, so she must speak, look, when she was with the person she loved. Every word, every glance, was caressing. But Elizabeth, who could see as far as most people, could also guess that Madame d'Hautemesnil might tell a different story. She had heard, besides, that Pauline's tempers and tantrums were almost unendurable, and that she was so spoilt and so capricious as to seem, at times, scarcely sane.

The Princess had, it seemed, a practical, domestic side, and as they sat drinking tea and eating little cakes, they discussed prices and ways and means until Elizabeth began to feel that she was taking tea with a Baltimore matron. Bo talked to Madame d'Hautemesnil, but she saw him casting admiring and curious glances at his aunt. Presently Pauline asked Elizabeth if she would care to see her bedroom and her jewels, and on learning that she would, rose from her couch, and, walking slowly and a little feebly, led her through one salon after another—eight in all—until they reached her bedroom.

It was a room typical of the best days of the Empire, and Elizabeth was charmed with it. Over the dressing-table was a silver eagle that Napoleon, Pauline told her, had left to her in his will. "It was in his bedroom at St. Helena," she said, with a heavy sigh. The hangings of the really magnificent bed were of maize-coloured satin caught back with gold wreaths, and Elizabeth marvelled at the beauty of the bed-cover of point lace,

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and at the fineness of the embroidered cambric sheets. Pauline opened an inlaid cabinet, and drew out necklaces, tiaras, bracelets, rings, that made Elizabeth exclaim with wonder and delight.

"But these," said Pauline, "are only a portion of what I once had. I have had to sell so much, so much! Poverty is cruel! I had to sell things given to me by friends who loved me, by my little Le Clerc, even by Napoleon himself."

"Poverty!" thought Elizabeth, and smiled to herself. "What would they think if they had to live even as I do, counting every penny?" "Poverty," she said, "is cruel indeed. But it is most cruel when it deprives the people one loves of the things that would mean so much to them. For myself I want nothing, but it grieves me to see Bo badly dressed, ill-equipped, cramped by lack of means. I want to do so much for him, and I can do so little."

"But there, at least, I can help," Pauline said, dropping the jewels back into their drawers. "If he is to go about in Roman society, he must have new clothes. He is so handsome, it is a pity for him not to look his best. You must allow me, if you will, to give him enough money to buy a whole new trousseau for himself, as if he were a little bride. He is so sweet, it would give me great pleasure to do this."

Elizabeth, who thought she had better accept whatever was offered—she began to think it would not be very much—said she would be delighted. He needed new clothes badly, for in Geneva clothes were both dear and poor.

"I have great hopes for my son," she said, as they walked slowly back to the main salon.

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"We must marry him well," said the Princess.

"That is precisely what I wish to do," said Elizabeth, "and I have already chosen, in my own mind, whom he is to marry."

"But wait! But wait!" cried Pauline excitedly. "I, too, have someone to suggest. And that someone is my brother Joseph's daughter Charlotte; Lolotte, we call her. And I will tell you something; Joseph himself spoke of it once in a letter to me. 'We must marry Lolotte to a Bonaparte,' he said. 'Why should she not marry the son of Madame Patterson?' There, does that surprise you? It is one of the things I most wished to speak to you about."

"It is the very same young lady I had in mind myself," said Elizabeth, smiling. "If Joseph has already suggested it," she thought, delighted, "the thing is as good as done!"

"So you thought of it too! Excellent! Well then, we will see that it takes place. I will write to Joseph myself, at once. Such a marriage would be something to look forward to. Lolotte," she said, drooping her head sideways and looking up, "is so sweet. Dear little Lolotte! You will love her, I am sure. She will make Bo such a good wife. And Joseph, you know, is the only one of us who is not poor. He will settle something on her, something substantial, I have no doubt at all."

The object of these plans was meanwhile talking quite happily to Madame d'Hautemesnil, and was describing to her what life in America was like. As Pauline and Elizabeth returned, he was heard to say:

"I wish you could come to America, madame. For myself, I wouldn't exchange one square mile of Mary-

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land for the greatest estate in France or Switzerland or Italy."

"Bo is being the good patriot," said Elizabeth, with her quick little smile. And she added, "*Au cœur bien né la patrie est chère.*"

"Oh, how true that is!" Pauline exclaimed. "And how I long for France! Shall I ever see it again? But Madame d'Hautemesnil must not monopolize your son completely. Bo—what a delightful little name!—come, draw your chair up close, close to my couch, and talk to me."

Her way with him was almost embarrassingly lover-like, Elizabeth thought, but she was comforted by the thought that to Bo she must seem very old indeed. "So perhaps I need not worry unduly," she said to herself.

They went again the next day, and this time found other visitors. But they were asked to stay on until they had gone, and when they were alone, Pauline sent Madame d'Hautemesnil for some articles she wished to give to Elizabeth.

"You say you bought few clothes in Geneva," she said. "I thought last night of a ball-dress I have, which does not become me, now that I have grown pale and ill, but would become you quite marvellously. It is new and very pretty. And there is a bonnet, and a cloak as well. It would make me very happy if you would accept them. We are the same height exactly, and the same figure."

The articles were brought, and Elizabeth accepted them with delight. "Take what you are offered," some warning sense advised. "You will not be offered very much." And then the Princess would not be satisfied until Elizabeth had agreed to go into her bedroom and

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put them on and then return to show them all how well they suited her.

"They might have been made for you, mamma," said Bo, admiringly. "You and the Princess are like sisters."

Pauline was pleased, and gave Bo one of her most seductive glances. "How you flatter your poor little aunt! I was almost afraid to meet your mother, for fear I should resent what people have so often told me; that we resemble each other. But now that I have seen her, nothing delights me more than to hear it."

Their frequent visits were agreeable enough, but quite inconclusive. Pauline did, in fact, send Bo out with an old friend of hers—said to be the best-dressed man in Rome—to buy himself a complete new outfit—"Even to your flannel jacket," she told him. But Elizabeth could not help feeling that Bo was a trifle humiliated at being treated like a small boy, and that a settlement would have been far more tactful and agreeable. All Pauline seemed prepared to do, however, was to make him a dress allowance of two thousand francs per year—four hundred dollars—which, though it was something, was not what Elizabeth had hoped for. As for Bo, he wanted nothing from the Princess, and refused to interest himself in the matter at all.

Bo was now perfectly well aware that there was a plan afoot to marry him to his cousin Charlotte, but he did not trouble his head about it very much. It was the custom, he knew, for European parents to interest themselves in the marriages of their children, and it seemed to him a harmless enough occupation provided that the project was sufficiently far in the future, and sufficiently improbable. The idea of a marriage with his cousin, whom he had never seen, or, indeed, of any

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marriage at present, seemed to him fantastic, and at first he could not believe that either his mother or his aunt were serious about it. He put it out of his mind as far as possible, and when his mother referred to it, as she frequently did, he made light of it and treated it merely as a joke.

The day came when they were to pay their respects to Madame Mère. She sent her carriage for them one afternoon, and they found themselves at the gates of yet another magnificent palazzo. This one belonged to Cardinal Fesch, Madame Mère's half-brother, and each of them occupied one floor in it and kept quite separate establishments; a way of living, Bo was astonished to find, which was much practised in Rome. In the great rooms on the ground floor were hung or stored the Cardinal's enormous collection of pictures, and through a doorway they caught a glimpse of hundreds of them stacked on the floor and covered over with dust-sheets. The main staircase was nearly as fine as the one in the Palazzo Borghese, and it, too, was hung with enormous paintings, chiefly, it seemed to Bo, of sprawling, half-clothed gods and goddesses. They were met at the head of the stairs by Madame Mère's friend, companion and secretary, Rosa Mellini, dressed all in black and looking like a respectable housekeeper. She welcomed them, however, in the most cordial and charming manner, and took them to Madame Mère.

When Bo first saw his grandmother he was struck by the extraordinary and piquant contrast between her and his American grandfather. "And I," he thought, "am descended from them both! It hardly seems possible!" And yet he was quickly convinced that the two would have much in common, for he saw at once that they

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were people of great firmness of character, great determination, great common sense. The old woman, looking far more Italian than French, rose up from a high-backed chair to greet them, wearing a long, black woollen gown that made her look like the priestess of some melancholy order, and a black woollen turban, worn high on her head. She was a remarkable, an imposing figure. But she held out both hands to Elizabeth, welcomed her warmly, and then turned to Bo and kissed him on the forehead, taking him in her arms as she did so, as tenderly as if he were her own son.

Cardinal Fesch was beside her, and his welcome was equally friendly. Indeed, he alone, of all the family, had never admitted the legality of the divorce, and Elizabeth well knew this, and was grateful to him for it. In his eyes therefore, Bo was the only legitimate child of his father, and Elizabeth was all the more eager to be on friendly terms with him. If he continued to take that point of view, surely, on his death, he would be disposed to settle something on the child. She believed there was perhaps more to be hoped for from the Cardinal than from any other member of the family. As for Bo, he had never before met a Cardinal, and was fascinated by the splendour of his dress, and by the scarlet stockings, but he had too much poise to let it be seen that he thought them in any way remarkable.

For Elizabeth, eminently practical and unsentimental though she was, this was an historic and memorable meeting. Here was the astonishing woman who had loosed upon the world that most astonishing son. And she marvelled, at the same time, that one mother could have produced children so utterly dissimilar, not only

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from herself, but from one another. To come here straight from Pauline and her gatherings was to come from an aviary of bright, noisy, chattering birds into the gloom and majesty of a cathedral.

"Napoleon and this old lady," she thought, "they were the ones who had genius!"

Even now, Madame Mère spoke French indifferently and with an accent, but her words had a way of lingering on the ear long after they were spoken.

"I have looked forward so much, so much to this moment," she said, and her voice, though surprisingly deep, was, nevertheless, melodious and unmistakably feminine. "The Cardinal will tell you how often I have spoken of you, and wished to meet you, but we have been far apart."

"I was only too delighted to have this opportunity of calling on you, madame," said Elizabeth. "However difficult the journey—and it was far from easy—I was determined that my son should have the happiness of meeting you all, if I could possibly bring it about."

"You were right to bring him. How old is he?" the old lady asked. "Seventeen? It is the age at which young men can be of the greatest comfort and consolation to their mothers, as I am sure, my son, you already know. I am much touched and moved by his resemblance—it is very marked—you see it, Joseph, do you not?—to . . . to my own son . . . it is best not to speak of it, perhaps. I find I have not yet learnt to speak of him without emotion."

Her long, sombre face grew tragic, her mouth quivered, her eyes filled with tears, but in a moment she had control of herself again.

"You see, to me, it is only the other day. They did

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not allow me to go to him; nor Pauline. There are some things that may not be forgiven or forgotten. Now, we will speak of other things. I hope you are happy in Rome. Tell me, my son, what you have seen here."

"Really, not very much, as yet," Bo answered. "We were not pleased with the first apartment we took, and I have been very busy finding another, and trying to make a tight bargain." He smiled as he said it. "You see, I speak Italian only a little, and mamma speaks even less. All that I have seen so far is St. Peter's, and that only superficially, I am afraid."

Cardinal Fesch offered to be his guide, if he wished, for further sightseeing, and Bo readily accepted, as his mother was not a good sightseer and tired easily.

Presently Madame Mère got up from her chair and asked Elizabeth if she would care to see her bedroom. "I have no jewels," she said, with a smile, "but I have other treasures that I would like to show you."

Elizabeth followed her through a succession of rooms somewhat less richly furnished (though they were rich enough) than those in the Palazzo Borghese until her bedroom was reached, and here she saw the true taste of Madame Mère herself, for everything was as simple and homely as it could well be. Beside the bed was a small mahogany table, and the old lady went to it, rested her hand upon it and said:

"This is one of the treasures I spoke of. It was his, and was sent to me after his death. Every day he wrote on it, and when he was ill, his tray was placed upon it. Now, every morning of my life, it serves to hold my breakfast tray. It is a link, inestimably dear to me. Here is another." She moved across the room, her long

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woollen dress trailing behind her, and laid both hands on the bronze head of the little King of Rome, whose bust stood on a small pedestal by the window. "It is the likeness of my son's son. Every day during his exile his eyes, his lips, caressed it. Now it is to have a home with me, until I die. These are the things I love best, and value most."

Elizabeth thanked her for showing them to her. She was much moved by the old lady's noble, resigned and tragic air, and by the great self-control she had just displayed in speaking of and touching these objects, which meant so infinitely much to her, without giving way to tears. She saw that she lived, now, in the past, that her life was dedicated to that son whom she adored, but whom she never forbore to chide, and, when she felt the need to do so, to criticize.

She herself stood looking upon the bust of the little King of Rome with mingled feelings. Bo's cousin! And never, perhaps, in the world's history, was there a child in whom vaster projects, vaster dreams and ambitions were bound up. And every one of them, as far as one could see, was destined to destruction. All the vanity of human desires seemed to have gathered about that little head, and to have perished there. Here was something she could understand, something with which she could sympathize only too well. She put out her hand, and touched the beautifully modelled brow with her fingers.

"We want too much for them," she said, quietly, and her words went straight to the old woman's heart.

"You too," she said, "are a mother, with all the feelings of a mother. Believe me, my dear, we will do whatever we can for your son."

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Elizabeth's moment of emotion soon passed. Practical considerations rushed back into her mind again.

"Tell me, madame," she said, when they had talked, for a while, of other things, "would you, I wonder, think well of a plan which your daughter, the Princess Borghese, was discussing with me the other day? It is to marry your granddaughter, Charlotte, the daughter of the Count de Survilliers, to my son. If it has your blessing—as I believe it already has the Count's—I should be too happy."

It was evident that Madame Mère was not ignorant of it herself, for the suggestion did not seem new to her.

"Why not?" she said. "If you wish it, and my son thinks well of it, I also would like it. Lolotte, I believe, is a good girl, and intelligent. As for your son, I am delighted with him. You have brought him up well." She turned towards the door. "We must return to the salon now. If I walk or stand too long, I grow very tired."

Even as she spoke, Rosa Mellini appeared, some concern in her face, and taking Madame Mère's arm, said something in Italian.

"I was just coming," the old lady said, and waved Elizabeth on. "I am so slow," she said, "pray go first, my dear."

A few days later, Elizabeth wrote to her father:

Madame, knowing the state of Jerome's finances and the improbability of his ever doing anything for anyone, wishes Joseph to provide for this child by a marriage. I have given my consent and promise that he shall remain with Joseph wherever he may be. This I have stated, as well as the

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impossibility of my giving any money, my income being with great economy barely sufficient for my own maintenance. Bo feels the propriety of doing what I please on the subject of the marriage, and has no foolish idea of disposing of himself in the way young people do in America.

And later, in December, she wrote again:

Bo has been welcomed by his family; his grandmother and his aunt have written to the Count their desire to marry him immediately to his daughter now in America, and have asked me to take him in the spring if the Count still perseveres in wishing this connection. [She then began to look even beyond the marriage.] There is one thing, however, which must be insisted upon; in the event of her death before him, part of her fortune must be his. I cannot expose him to the inconvenience of contracting expensive habits, losing his education by marrying at this time, too, without some certain support if he be left a widower. This point must be stipulated.

In all the world she could not have found a less willing party to these matrimonial schemes than her father. He was profoundly shocked and disgusted. Such a cold-blooded alliance as this seemed to him horrible, and the thought of offering up his beloved grandson on the altar of a marriage of convenience revolted him. Bo's own letters to the old man comforted him somewhat, for in them he made no mention of the matter; but this consolation was presently taken from him, for at last a letter came in which the boy spoke of nothing else, and the old man's heart sank.

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My grandmother and my aunt and uncle talk of marrying me to my uncle's, the Count of Survilliers' daughter, who is in the United States. I hope it may take place, for then I would return immediately to America, to pass the rest of my life among my relations and friends. Mamma is very anxious for the match. My father is also, and all of my father's family, so that I hope you will also approve of it.

Vain hope! But the old man read between the lines, and he saw that Bo looked upon this marriage as the price he might have to pay for the privilege of being permitted to live in America rather than in Europe. Poor Bo! Was it his fate to become an object of barter between his mother and this tribe of self-important Bonapartes, who still behaved as if half the world belonged to them? At least, the old man said to himself, Bo's heart was in the right place still; his motives were pure. "For then I would return immediately to America to pass the rest of my life among my relations and friends." Europe, so far, had not corrupted him!

He was now bombarded with letters on the subject. Elizabeth seemed to be concerned, at present, with little else. She was obviously determined to marry Bo, and to his cousin.

"As I plainly see, it is the only way of relieving myself of the expense he occasions me, and which I can ill afford."

Was she, perhaps, bargaining with the old man himself? If he had offered to provide her with an annual income, would she have been content to let Bo find his own happiness? To do so never entered Mr. Patterson's head. He never listened to her complaints; they went

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in at one ear and out of the other, instantaneously. She had plenty of money already, if only she had chosen to live at home like a sensible woman. He had no pity for her. When she said, "I have not written to Miss Spear since our arrival because of the expense of postage," it had no effect on him at all. If she had had forty thousand dollars a year, he believed she would have said precisely the same thing.

Pauline's feelings about the marriage were not difficult to guess. She liked Bo, but she did not wish to be put to any expense on his account. After all, she was a young and beautiful woman still, and had other uses for money, and as a woman grows older and less beautiful, more and more uses for money present themselves. After all, Joseph was the richest of the family, and the most secure. Should Bo become his son-in-law, what more natural than that he should wish to make him a handsome allowance? It seemed to Pauline, as it seemed to Elizabeth, an eminently practical idea.

Madame Mère desired it because she liked to keep the tribe together, and dreaded that her grandchildren might lower the whole position of the family by ill-conceived marriages. Also, she felt sorry for Elizabeth, and seeing that the plan was one she had very much at heart, favoured it all the more on that account. They both urged Elizabeth, therefore, to send the boy at once to America. "And then," Pauline said to her, in her sweetest tones, "you shall come and live with me."

"Not I," thought Elizabeth, who was not blind to Pauline's shortcomings. "Not for all the tea in China." But she was pleased at having been asked. More and more she felt that she was now looked upon as one of the family.

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Her hopes, indeed, were soaring. What was there to prevent Joseph from settling a hundred thousand dollars on a son-in-law of whom he approved? And apart from Bo, or a son of Louis', or possibly the Murat boy, who was there for her to marry? Charlotte was not only the daughter of the ex-King of Spain, she was the niece, as well, of the present Queen of Sweden. She would be one of the best matches in Europe, and, if care were not taken, the prey of fortune-hunters. That was why it was best for the marriage to go forward as soon as possible. One never knew.

It was not, of course, in her nature to ignore the possibility of failure. If the plan miscarried, Bo would at once, she told her father, go to Cambridge, to Harvard College, there to finish his education. It would give her time to find another, perhaps equally desirable *parti* for him.

"I will never consent," she wrote, "to his marrying anyone but a person of great wealth. He knows I can only recognize a marriage of ambition and of interest, and that his name and his rank require it." And she cautioned her father most particularly against discussing the marriage with Miss Spear or with the boys. She knew too well what their attitude would be, and how they would express disapproval, or laugh and make jokes and jeer.

At last Mr. Patterson, figuratively speaking, threw up his hands. He had expressed his views freely and fully, and Elizabeth had taken no heed. He supposed he would have to accept the situation, and cling to the hope that Bo, when he saw his intended, would find her not at all to his taste.

In January it was arranged that Bo should sail in a

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brig called the *White Oak* from Leghorn, about the end of February; and his Uncle Louis, ex-King of Holland, who was now a cripple and confined to a wheeled-chair, sent a "confidential person" to accompany him to the place of embarkation, his only contribution to Bo's well-being.

When he knew that Bo was about to sail for home, Mr. Patterson made up his mind that he would no longer attempt to turn his grandson from his purpose. To do so would only cause "ructions", and he had no mind for them. He would do, he decided, whatever was expected of him. But a go-between was necessary, and as Elizabeth's old friend Madame Tussard was friendly with the Count and his family he wrote to her, asking her—how he hated having to do it!—to sound the Count as to his intentions.

"This is an unusual way of making matches in this country," he said, with a certain grim self-restraint, "for those who are capable of choosing for themselves, but if it should take place I hope it will be for the best."

Bo arrived safely in New York harbour on the 12th of April, 1822, and at once wrote a letter to his grandfather to inform him of his arrival and to tell him that he was to spend a few days with his Uncle Joseph at Bordentown. He would then, he said, at once set out for Baltimore. A certain shyness and embarrassment showed itself in the letter.

"Mamma has written to you the object of my journey. I left her in Rome. She intends to go thence to Geneva, there to remain, her health being too delicate (as she thinks) to support the American climate."

Elizabeth remained in Rome for some time longer, hoping for word from Bo as to the outcome of his visit.

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She continued to visit Pauline and Madame Mère, the former from a sense of duty only, and with the flagging hope that she might, if she decided not to settle anything on him at present, leave him something in her will. For she had said no more even about the little allowance of four hundred dollars a year for his dress. Elizabeth hardly knew what to do. To terminate her visits might be a blunder, but to continue them now seemed to her, in view of Pauline's behaviour, humiliating and wearisome. One day, during one of the visits, she was taken violently sick—nerves and worry were doubtless the cause of it—and could not stop vomiting. This had happened to her once or twice before, but what had not happened to her before was to be offered a basin of pure gold. The incident amused her, even at the time, and she often spoke of it afterwards.

Pauline had given her nothing but the dress, cloak and bonnet, and a pin, which Elizabeth thought of doubtful value, and a few days before she was to return to Geneva, she sent a messenger to Elizabeth's rooms asking that the dress be returned to her. Elizabeth, extremely angry, took it out of her drawer and tossed it contemptuously to the person who had been sent for it. Really, the woman must be mad. She gave things and then took them away, she made promises and broke them. Elizabeth began to think that Lady Morgan must have been right when she suggested in one of her letters that much of the interest Pauline was showing (though not to the point of parting with money) in herself and Bo was inspired by a desire to annoy Jerome, whom she disliked, and Catherine, whom she hated. Not much escaped Lady Morgan's sharp intelligence. "Believe," she advised, "what Madame

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Mère says, but place reliance in none of the others."

And now Jerome, who called himself the Count de Montford, was given permission to visit Rome, and arrived one day bringing his family with him. It seemed that Lady Morgan had been right, for he was very angry with Pauline—so Elizabeth heard—for encouraging his first wife's "pretensions" and "ambitions". Pauline, to protect herself from his anger, vowed that Elizabeth and Bo had come entirely on their own initiative and without an invitation from her, and this, too, reached Elizabeth's ears, for the whole of Rome was a sort of whispering gallery.

As she had no wish whatever to meet Jerome, and was disgusted with Pauline's behaviour, she thought it just as well that she had planned to leave so soon for Geneva. Bo's letters would reach her there almost as soon as in Rome, Princess Galitzin wished to share a house with her, and Prince Demidoff wrote that he was arranging the usual balls and parties, but could take no interest in them until he knew for certain that she would be there.

Just as she was leaving her apartment, a servant came from the Palazzo Borghese, bringing back the dress. Pauline, evidently, had had a change of heart, and now wished her to have it. By this time Elizabeth had no further use for it, and thought of sending it back again, but discretion prevailed. She wrote a hasty note, and thrust the dress into one of her boxes. It would serve as a souvenir of the most irritating, capricious and undependable of women.

CHAPTER XIV

Bo behaved very well, with considerable tact and self-restraint over the "*affaire* Charlotte". He went to Bordentown (the place was called Point Breeze), he was cordially received by his Uncle Joseph, and he was brought face to face with his cousin. But unattractive though she undoubtedly was, he never let either her or her father suspect what a shock he had received. And, in fact, there were other reasons, besides her lack of charm, to cause him to hope with all his heart that as a suitor he would be found wanting. To live in Uncle Joseph's house at Bordentown, on the Delaware, was to live not in his own country, but in the Bonaparte *milieu*. If this were still America—and only the views of the Delaware could persuade him of it—it was an America so filtered and watered down by Bonaparte pictures, eagles, busts, statuary, marbles, hangings, decorations, atmosphere and traditions as to be unrecognizable. He had hoped to find the sort of place he was accustomed to: simple colonial architecture; a pillared house, white painted, with green shutters to keep out the sun; pleasant, simple rooms filled with the pretty, graceful mahogany furniture that Americans loved. But within these walls, within these grounds, his own country was banished. And they would expect him, his mother had said, to live here!

But that was not all. He found his uncle lacking in humour, very strict as to etiquette and inclined to be dull, and it seemed to be his custom to sit endlessly

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indoors, about a centre table, and make conversation—if conversation it could be called—with his family and their friends. It was much more, Bo thought, like a game of questions and answers. Charlotte was quite nicely brought up and quite amiable—though dreadfully good at thinking of questions—but she attracted him not at all. In vain he told himself that she must possess excellent qualities to have chosen to join her father in his exile, leaving her mother, Europe and her friends behind her. It did not alter the fact that she was badly made, “dumpy”, with a short, thick neck and heavy shoulders, and that she was totally devoid of spontaneity and charm. That she was nearly two years older than himself he already knew, but in appearance, at least, she might have been much more.

He tried not to show his boredom, but felt that in spite of his efforts, it oozed from him. He was taken to see the statuary, the ornamental bridges, the tiresome little artificial waterfalls, the pond-plants—the garden was just coming to life after a severe winter—the horses, the cattle and the pigs; and none of them seemed real to him. They were all toys, brought there at the command of a bored, ageing and wistful ex-king.

“You like horses?” Charlotte asked. “You ride well? Do you admire most a brown, a black or a white horse? Did you ride in Rome? Yes? And perhaps also in Geneva? Your mother, does she also ride?”

Her questions were interminable. He answered them with a growing irritation, a growing desperation. This was not *talk*, as he knew it. He tried to stop the endless flow of polite query by speaking of his visits to her relations; of her grandmother, her Aunt Pauline, her

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Uncle Louis, but he could not even stanch it. She continually broke in with:

"You like Aunt Pauline, yes? You think her pretty? Did you meet her friends? Did you meet our good Great-uncle Fesch? He is very nice, you think so? Did you like the palazzo of my grandmother? Did you not prefer the Palazzo Borghese? Did you not think it the finest palazzo you have ever seen? Did you admire the paintings? They are very fine; you think so? Which did you admire most?"

It was like the questions, he thought, in a French grammar. And Uncle Joseph was nearly as bad, though he was more inclined to make statements than to ask questions. All the same, it made easy or natural conversation almost equally difficult. "There will be another war with Spain. No Spaniard is to be trusted. It is a country that is unable to appreciate good government, or to profit by it. Most Englishmen are to be trusted as individuals, but the English government is wicked and deceitful. That is to say, the forms of government are good, the men who administer it are not. Nevertheless, it is perhaps the best country to live in at present."

He spoke very little of Napoleon, and Bo could not make up his mind whether this was due to reserve or indifference. Joseph, he knew, had done his best to persuade Napoleon to slip away to America with him. Suppose that he had succeeded? What, Bo wondered, looking about him, would the Emperor have done here? Would it have been very much better than St. Helena? He thought not. The life that his uncle lived seemed to him sad, empty, pointless, organized simply for the purpose of killing time in a way as suitable to exiled

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royalty as his means would allow. What would it have been for that untamable soul, his brother? Bo could not picture him there at all.

Joseph, in common with most of the Bonapartes, possessed good features and a handsome enough face, but he was of slightly less than average height, with a large head and a short neck, wherein his daughter resembled him. Her mother, Julie Clary, was sister to that Desirée Clary whom Napoleon had once courted, but who had married instead General Bernadotte, and was now Queen of Sweden. Both father and daughter had excellent, if rather formal, manners, but they completely failed to make Bo feel at home. He only knew that he felt suffocated there, and that he longed for his mother. She would have contrived to lighten and brighten the dullness; she would, most important of all, have seen for herself on what a hopeless errand she had sent him.

But, fortunately for Bo, Joseph, like most of his brothers and sisters, had a habit of changing his mind. He had thought well of the project in the beginning, but now that its fulfilment was at hand, he had begun to have doubts. This was a very attractive, agreeable boy, but he had no money at all and no prospects. Moreover, it was very questionable that he had any real right to the name of Bonaparte. To marry him to Charlotte would be a costly business, for the pair of them would have to be supported, perhaps indefinitely. It was true that Pauline, in the event of the marriage taking place, had promised to leave them something substantial in her will, but Joseph knew pretty well how much reliance was to be placed in such promises. Why should he—ex-King of Naples, ex-King of Spain—agree to marry his daughter to a young man who could

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bring neither money nor a title to the marriage? It seemed, now that he had had plenty of time to think it over, the purest folly. Undoubtedly the lad was charming and had been well brought up, but there were many other things to be considered. It would be wise, he thought, to send him on his way before Charlotte became too much interested in him. Not that she seemed likely, at present, to lose her head over him. She began, indeed, to show signs of a growing impatience with him; an impatience which, it is possible, her father understood but deliberately misinterpreted.

She came to him the morning after Bo's arrival. He was in his study, and he had seen the two young people but a few moments earlier, walking in the garden. She said she wanted to talk to him about young Jerome. She was not pleased with him.

"We are cousins," she complained, "yet he shows me no affection whatever. He will not even call me by my little name, Lolotte, but calls me Charlotte. He does not know how to make himself agreeable at all. And he laughs at me because I ask him questions. How else am I to know what he is like? Moreover, he shows no interest in the place, and when I asked him which he preferred, Point Breeze or Homewood, which he talks so much about, he said Homewood. That is not polite." She traced, with her finger, the inlaid brass of his writing-table. "I wish Zenaide were here. I am sure she would agree with everything I have said."

"But I agree with you," her father assured her. "I agree with you entirely. You need not concern yourself, for I do not now wish this marriage to take place. The young man has nothing but his good looks and an amiable character, and I do not propose to settle

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thousands of dollars upon someone who can bring you so little in return. If you find him uninteresting as well, there is nothing more to be said."

Charlotte pouted. She wanted her father to persuade Bo to pay her the sort of attention she thought she had the right to expect from a suitor.

"It is not exactly that I find him uninteresting," she said, leaning upon the table and continuing to follow the pattern with her finger.

"You have complained of him," said her father, firmly, "and that is enough. You did not, I am sure, complain without cause."

"It was not precisely that I meant to *complain*," she said.

"Nevertheless, you have complained, and you were perfectly right to do so. Nothing more need be said. He is not the husband I wish you to have, and I will see that he returns to his grandfather to-morrow. I have a letter here from my lawyers in Philadelphia, and as it would be as well for me to see them at once, I will go myself to-morrow and will take him with me. The matter is closed."

When Bo learnt that his uncle was unexpectedly called to Philadelphia on business the next day, he at once asked to be allowed to accompany him, which offer was as promptly accepted. No mention had been made of the marriage, though he had been expecting it, with a growing dread, from hour to hour. Now he understood that for some reason—no matter what—no mention of it would be made. He hardly knew to what cause to attribute this amazing good fortune, for he was convinced that they could have no real complaint to make of his behaviour. The next morning, while they

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were waiting for the horses to be harnessed to the coach, Charlotte took him into the garden to show him, she said, some crocuses that were just out—a few tender little blossoms which looked out of place in a pair of great urns, placed on either side of a flight of shallow stone steps.

“You like crocuses? Do you know that they are almost the first flowers to come up in the spring? Which flower do you like best? I asked you yesterday, but you said you did not know. Surely you like roses best, do you not? I myself prefer roses to all other flowers. Roses, in the language of flowers, mean love. Did you know that? If there were any roses in the garden I would give you some, but alas! it is too early for roses. It is a pity, is it not?”

Bo decided that he was not leaving a moment too soon. He was convinced that he had not really pleased Charlotte, but suspected that she did not want him to go without giving her some proof that she had pleased him. He had never kissed any girl but Katinka Galitzin, and then only in fun, and he did not mean to begin now. He said, therefore, that he preferred many other flowers to roses, and that roses dropped their petals too soon. “Perhaps,” he said, smiling, “that is why they have been chosen to represent love—they last such a short while.”

“You think that is so? Ah, but why are you so cynical? You have never loved, no? I have loved, though only very recently, but I feel, within myself, that love could be eternal. You have never felt so?”

No, he said, he had never loved anybody. Perhaps he was one of those unfortunates who go through life without ever experiencing the grand passion. There must be many of them. But she would not hear of this

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and plied him with more questions, which he answered as well as he could, about his brief and innocent past, until at last he could truthfully say:

"And now we must go back to the house, or we will keep the coach and your father waiting."

It was the end. All his mother's hopes and plans had come to nothing, and—he felt certain—through no fault of his. What Charlotte had really felt about it all he did not know, nor did he wish to know. But what he was quite sure of was that his uncle had exaggerated the urgency of the business in Philadelphia in order to shorten his visit. If he had wished, once, to have him as a son-in-law, he plainly did not wish it now. He could have shouted for joy. It was over, it was over, and he was as free as air once more! Oh, how good it would be to be in South Street again! How good to know that he could now pursue the ordinary normal life of a young man who has all his future before him! He would go to Cambridge. He would work hard and surprise everyone. In the coach, on the way to Philadelphia, he several times caught himself beginning to whistle a tune. Once his uncle caught him, and eyed him somewhat ironically. Then they smiled at each other. It was a moment of understanding, and they were never to be as close again.

Mr. Patterson's delight and triumph were enormous, and he made no attempt to conceal them. All was well. He had his grandson again, and the boy had escaped from the Bonaparte net that his mother had tried so hard to throw about him. The old man was frankly jubilant, and on the night of Bo's return, opened the best bottle of port his cellar contained. It was a present from Mr. Monroe, and had come from

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the most famous wine-merchant in London. He seldom drank port or any other wine nowadays, but here was an occasion to be celebrated. Every dish Bo had ever expressed a fondness for, including chicken à la Maryland and the juiciest of beefsteaks, found its way to the table that night. Robert, Mary, Elizabeth Caton, William, George, Edward, Henry and Joseph were there. It was one of the happiest evenings of Bo's life, always to be looked back upon with pleasure. A useless and pointless martyrdom had threatened him, and now it had been removed from his path. And he could still face his mother, for he believed that the failure of the plan was due to no fault of his.

When Bo's account of the visit reached her, Elizabeth was bitterly, painfully disappointed. It gave her, in fact, one of the worst shocks that had come her way for years, and as she had been far from well, she lacked the vitality to throw it off. She had not ignored the possibility of failure, because her common sense had told her that nothing in human affairs is certain; but she had believed, nevertheless, that it was as certain as anything in human affairs could be. When Bo reported that his uncle, without a word being said on the subject, had contrived to convey to him that whatever his feelings may have been earlier, they had changed now, she hardly knew what to think. It was a rebuff, certainly, and she wished that she had never risked receiving one from a member of that family.

I know you will be very much disappointed [he wrote], as your heart was so set on it, but I do not see what I could have done. I made myself as agreeable as I could—[he pondered this, wondering

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if it were strictly true, and decided that it was] and though I did not find Charlotte at all the sort of girl I had imagined her, I meant to act exactly as you would have wished me to act. My uncle talked a good deal of his nephew, Achille Murat, and also of Napoleon Louis, the son of my Uncle Louis, and I feel that he perhaps wishes her to marry one or the other. At any rate, their claims to my Uncle Joseph's favour are infinitely greater than my own. I am sorry, mamma, for I know how differently you hoped things would turn out, but I do not feel that I am personally responsible. I have been urged to pay another visit to Bordentown—though at no definite date—and we remain on perfectly cordial terms.

I shall now make plans to pass the necessary examinations for Harvard.

Elizabeth had been so certain of hearing that an understanding had been reached that she had already made arrangements to sail, so as to be on hand for the final settlements. Now it seemed that she need not disturb herself. There would be no marriage. She wrote to her father from Paris, where she was again staying:

Imagining that it would be improper in me to absent myself at a period so important to his future interests, I had resolved to embark, although suffering from a very severe illness which kept me in my room for six weeks, when I received a letter from Bo by which I plainly saw that I might save myself the trouble.

There is nothing can, or ever will, surprise me in

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that family. The only way is to act and feel exactly as if they had said and promised nothing.

Madame Mère, at least, had been perfectly sincere in her efforts to forward the match. By the hand of Rosa Mellini, but signed by herself, a letter was written and sent off to Joseph—it reached him just before Bo's arrival—in which she plainly stated her interest and approval.

MY DEAR SON,

Before this you will have embraced your Charlotte; she will be a great comfort to you. You were right to decide to marry her to Jerome's son. The young man has been here two months. I am amazed at him; it is hardly possible to find so much *aplomb* and good sense in one of his age, and there is no doubt that Charlotte will be happy.

You will find enclosed copies of the letters from his father and Catherine . . . they will show their desire to see this union effected. I have written to you, as Pauline did also on the 5th of December, that she has promised, in the event of this marriage, three hundred thousand francs at her death. . . .

And she ended the letter, in the Italian she so loved :

*Addio, caro figlio, sono la
Vostra Ottima Madre.*

In the end, Elizabeth put down the failure of the match to Joseph's unwillingness to part with money. And perhaps he had heard that, in Bo's mother, he would be dealing with a woman who would see that the

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settlements that were drawn up left no loop-holes, but thoroughly safeguarded all the interests of her son!

Was she always to be thwarted? Always, always? Other people realized their ambitions, why was she never to realize hers? What malign fate always intervened between her and the things she most desired? She was tortured by a sense of frustration, by a nightmare feeling of helplessness and ineffectualness.

Then, at last, her father forwarded to her a letter written to him by Madame Tussard, which had the effect of somewhat mitigating her suffering.

"I meet Joseph Bonaparte and his daughter very frequently in company," she wrote; "she is in size a dwarf and excessively ugly. Jerome is quite too handsome for her; it would be a great sacrifice. The present report is that Achille Murat is coming out to marry her."

"Surely," she thought, "Madame Tussard exaggerates. If Charlotte had been as hideous as she says, Bo would have had more to say on the subject. She knew the letter would be sent on to me, and is trying to comfort me."

There being no further need, at present, of her presence in America, she decided to return to Geneva after a few more weeks in Paris, where she was enjoying herself very much. Bo was studying with a clergyman near Cambridge, preparatory to taking his examinations for Harvard. His Greek was bad, and his mother feared that it might prove a serious handicap to him. If he could not get into Cambridge, there was, of course, West Point, but she did not like the idea of a military training for him. However, he was working very hard, and for the moment she was not dissatisfied—her only regret being that his handsome dog, Le Loup, which

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had travelled with him from Rome to America, and previously from Geneva to Rome, had not been permitted to keep him company in Cambridge. In every letter to both Bo and his grandfather she dwelt, ceaselessly, on the need for economy. It was necessary, she said, to save, save, save, and she implored Mr. Patterson to see that Bo did not imitate his father and develop a passion for spending, consoling herself at the same time with the thought that she had brought Bo up too carefully and well for him to have no regard for money.

"I think myself fortunate," she said, "that he was not born a fool, which two-thirds of the children brought into the world are."

The news of Robert's sudden death reached her in Geneva, and came as a shock. There had been no great love between her and any of her brothers—she wondered sometimes if there were room in her heart for anyone but Bo—and she got on best of all with Edward, but she was, nevertheless, saddened for a while. He was young, only a little older than herself; he had everything to live for. How fragile, how vulnerable a thing was human life! The world seemed to her even less secure, now, than formerly, and of what use to struggle when everything might be snatched away by death? But that feeling passed. Uncertain life might be, but it was as natural for her to struggle to obtain the things she wanted as it is for a healthy swimmer to struggle against a dangerous tide.

Then, not long after, she heard that Mary, loveliest of widows, was soon to sail for Europe. Nor was she the only young widow, now, in the Caton family, for Louisa's married life had been still more brief. Sir Felton Bathurst Hervey was dead, and the beautiful

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Lady Hervey was not a little comforted in her loss by the kindness and sympathy of the Duke, who had lost a favourite aide-de-camp and a friend. Elizabeth, still unmarried (as also was Emily, the youngest), was accompanying Mary abroad; so now all three were once again to join forces in Europe. Elizabeth dreaded their coming, though her comments were caustic enough.

"I hear," she wrote to her father, "that Mrs. R.P. is coming out. . . . Her sisters are not yet married, which, considering their persevering endeavours and invincible courage, rather surprises me."

She sometimes felt that she would like the Caton sisters never to have been born.

Presently she heard that they were in England, visiting the Duke and Duchess of Wellington at Stratfield Saye. Then, inevitably, they came to Paris, and she and Mary met, after an interval during which they had had time to cool towards each other considerably. That did not prevent Elizabeth from being stricken to the heart by the beauty of her sister-in-law. Was she to grow ever lovelier, and more lovely? It was not surprising, she was forced to admit to herself, that men fell down before her. She had the great advantage, besides, of never considering her words, of chattering, in fact, freely, gaily, naturally, about anything or nothing. The Gallatins were eager to see her, and Elizabeth, determined that no one should guess how tormented she was by jealousy of her, took her there to dine. Young James could not take his eyes off her, but he managed to divide his attentions pretty equally between the two, for though he thought Mary quite as lovely as Madame Bonaparte, she amused him less. She was not, he thought, at all clever.

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She and her sisters were quite determined, now, to live in Europe, and were charmingly frank about their aspirations.

"We all intend," said Mary, laughing and showing her perfect teeth, "to marry Englishmen. We're all in the marriage market, Betsy, Louisa and I, and English husbands we *will* have! Of course, I would marry the Duke to-morrow if he hadn't got himself dear Kitty for a wife long before he ever heard of me. I always tell him so, to his face, and her too, and it always makes them laugh. As for Louisa, she's as English now as she can be—far more English than American. I vow I never knew anybody, no, not *anybody*, who could pick up new ways of talking and behaving as quickly as Louisa can. I'm not like that. I can't even learn the French language, and what's more, I don't mean to try."

On, on it went, the gay, careless flow of her talk. Everyone felt at home with her. If they didn't feel like talking or had nothing to say, Mary would do it all. She was as comfortable, someone said, "as an old shoe" and put people at their ease at once. Even with Frenchmen who could speak no English she got on excellently, for she derived enormous amusement from her own efforts to speak French. Did she miss Robert, Elizabeth wondered? If so, how could she be so gay? Or was her gaiety to keep herself from too much thinking of her loss? Elizabeth thought not; but even if Mary had mourned him unceasingly she would not have believed her to be sincere. Nothing Mary did could please her.

The rumour of their wealth got abroad—spread, Elizabeth firmly believed, by the sisters themselves—

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and they continued to be sought after, talked of and praised.

"But none of them will ever marry a Bonaparte," Elizabeth said to herself. "And, after all, see what a success I have had; without money, without help, and with a child to think of! And at least I have never spoken nor behaved like a vulgar adventuress. I have never made myself cheap." Now that Robert was dead, she felt she owed Mary no loyalty. Her avowed readiness to marry again and that of her sisters to find themselves husbands, shocked and disgusted her. Even Lady Morgan, most tolerant of women, was a little astonished. "Really," she said to Elizabeth the next time they met, "it is beyond beyond!"

But the Caton sisters saw no reason to hide their intentions under a cloak of coyness and reluctance. They quite frankly wanted good husbands who could place them in good society. Why pretend that this was not so? And after all, for what other purpose did lovely young women trouble to make themselves lovelier, and go about as much as possible in the *beau monde*? If they did not want husbands, let them stay at home and knit. They saw no shame in it, no reason for concealment. There was not a particle of malice in them. They enjoyed, they wished to be enjoyed. They were three very desirable creatures, and were not unaware of it, and if they showed a disposition to make three equally desirable men happy, surely that was natural enough.

All this gave Elizabeth plenty of opportunity for sarcasm, and pointed comment, and she could not forbear to be caustic at their expense. It was her firm conviction, before very long, that Mary, under cover of

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a friendship for poor Kitty, was carrying on an affair with the Duke. What was more, she let this belief be freely known.

She had brought her Cheltenham friend, Miss Clagston, and Mr. John Jacob Astor together, with the surprising and unexpected result that Mr. Astor asked Miss Clagston to marry him and was accepted. It gave Elizabeth a great deal of amusement, and as she would not for the world have married Mr. Astor herself, she took considerable pleasure in having made the match. But she wrote to her father, a little tartly, from Paris :

Miss Clagston, now Mrs. Astor, is here, delighted with matrimony and French funds. She tells me [or did Elizabeth's own feelings colour the lady's words?] that the Duke of Wellington gave Mary a cool reception on her second visit to Europe, that the Duke is said to be tired of the Catons [how happy she would have been had this been true!]; but, tired or not, they pursue him, live on his estate, and until he gets them husbands he will never get rid of them.

"Find us husbands!" Who could fail to be amused at such a demand when it was made by three such exceptionally attractive young women? Few could resist the impulse to try their hands, and half the people they met in England brought forward brothers, cousins or sons, and introduced them. And the Catons laughed, flirted, chattered, made jokes (among themselves) about their suitors, were always kind, and seemed in no danger of entangling themselves foolishly. George IV particularly admired Mary, and she appeared at balls at the Pavilion, in Brighton, and danced, promenaded,

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coquetted and even went in for sea-bathing there.

Elizabeth thanked heaven that she was not as the Caton sisters were, and went off to Geneva. The Gallatins, to her great grief, were returning to America, James with instructions from her to make himself known to, and to marry Josephine, the youngest of the Pascault girls, Henrietta Rewbell's sister. Curiously enough, he followed out her instructions to the letter, and wrote to her jubilantly, proclaiming the fact. She was more fortunate, it appeared, in making matches for others than for her son.

However, she decided that Bo was very well where he was, at present. He had passed his examinations satisfactorily, and was enjoying university life. He was diligent and, so far as she knew, economical. She was very anxious that he should distinguish himself in his studies. "He is too conspicuously placed," she told her friends, "to permit himself to rest contented with the exertions made by other people." She implored him, however, not to run the risk of falling in love, or making an imprudent marriage, and harped on it again and again, both to him and to her father.

"Love in a cottage is quite out of fashion, even in novels," she wrote to her father. "I should consider an amiable, prolific daughter-in-law a very poor compensation for all the trouble and anxiety I have had with that boy."

When she learnt from Miss Spear the alarming news that Bo, since his return to America, had spent two thousand one hundred and fifty dollars, she was horrified. This, most emphatically, would not do, and she wrote scolding letters to Bo and indignant ones to her father.

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"I may as well spend my income myself," she complained, "as see it squandered by him; and there is indeed little encouragement for me to endure privations, if their result is to be:

" 'This year a reservoir to keep and spare,
The next a fountain spouting through my heir.' "

It was all very worrying, and she began to learn whist, finding it invaluable for keeping her mind off unpleasant things.

Bo, while he was in Rome with his mother, had received a letter from his father—the first—and he now kept up a fairly regular correspondence with him. Jerome and Catherine were better treated now by her relations. The King of Würtemberg, her brother, had at last consented to make her an allowance, and they received one as well from the Tzar of Russia. Madame Mère could also be looked to for help, though they were as disinclined as ever to listen to her advice: "Imitate me. Retrench, retrench!" They had finally been permitted to live at Göppingen, in Würtemberg, but were too closely supervised there for Jerome's taste, and had since moved from place to place, preferring Trieste to most. As the Count and Countess de Montfort, a certain style and elegance, Jerome considered, must be maintained, with the consequence that they were never out of debt. At what was, undoubtedly, some sacrifice to himself, for Jerome could use every penny that came his way, he now made Bo a small allowance which paid for his clothes and kept him in pocket-money—or would have done if he could have depended upon its regularity. It pleased him, however, to receive it, for he liked to feel that his father was sufficiently interested in him

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to send it. Also, it relieved his mother somewhat. He sincerely hoped that the day was not far off when he would be able to earn money himself, and instead of taking it from his mother, to repay her, perhaps, some of the money she had spent on him. Her constant reminders that she was depriving herself of comforts for his sake, troubled and hurt him. He gathered from her letters that though loath to leave Europe and surrounded, as ever, by persons of note, she was, in reality, bored and lonely, and he implored her to return to America and make a home for herself there. His pleadings did not leave her unmoved. Besides, she had been wondering for some time if Europe were large enough to hold herself and Mary Patterson, to whom the Duke was now, undoubtedly, paying the most marked attentions. Altogether, she decided it was time for her to return, if not permanently, at least for a visit, and so sailed in July, 1824, with a new scheme in her head for the advancement of Jerome's fortunes.

It was annoying, upon arrival, to find that he had been suspended from Harvard. The offence, it was true, was a minor one, and in her opinion, did not justify the punishment, his crime being merely that he had joined a club (and sometimes drank a little rum punch there in company with his fellows), the formation of which he mistakenly believed had been authorized and approved by the authorities. But she took it, he thought, very well, and they went together to spend the time of his rustication at the pretty little tree-shaded town of Lancaster, Massachusetts. It was a lovely summer, and if it were not that she was full of her new schemes for him, he would have been perfectly happy.

"I think you ought to consider the matter very

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seriously, Bo," she said to him, soon after their arrival in Lancaster. "The Bacciochi girl was left as ward to your father. He has sole charge of her income, which I believe to be considerable. I have no reason to suppose that she is not an agreeable young woman, and certainly would be an excellent match for a young man in your circumstances; with a great name, but no money."

Bo, however, avoided discussion of the project whenever he could.

"Trieste," he said to her, on this occasion, "is too far from Lancaster; and I am much too happy in my single state."

Now that she was in America, she paid close attention to her affairs, and spent hours going over accounts, letters and records with Miss Spear. She owned properties which must be seen to, there were funds to re-invest. She had to decide what her own living arrangements were to be, and toyed with the idea of settling in Boston or even perhaps Cambridge, where she would be still nearer to Bo. She found, however, that there were no suitable lodgings to be had in Boston, and as for settling in Cambridge, it was considered, by the professors, undesirable for the parents of students to live so near. She was easily dissuaded. Madame Tussard was now planning to go to Paris, and she decided to accompany her and share expenses with her while abroad. Edward, her favourite brother, had already sailed, and she thought that if he stayed there a year she might return to America with him.

Mr. Patterson fairly exploded with anger when he heard that she had made up her mind to go.

"You've no sooner arrived than you want to be off again. Such behaviour is well-nigh insane. You prate,

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the whole time, of economy, and yet you spend these enormous sums on senseless voyages. Can you never be still? You have property in Baltimore. Why not settle down here and furnish a house for yourself? ”

She always managed to keep her temper with him.

“ There is nothing here for me,” she said. “ I cannot support the ennui of a town where everything is trade, and talk of trade. The life of Baltimore wearies me beyond words. I can only be happy in Europe.”

“ Happy? ” he said, staring angrily at her from under his white brows. “ Happy? I doubt if you know the meaning of the word.”

He might as well have saved his breath.



CHAPTER XV

AFTER a voyage of just under a month—there were no less than five widowed American ladies on the boat, and they all played a great deal of whist to while away the time—they reached Havre, and here, for a while, Elizabeth remained. The Marquis de Lafayette—to whom her father had just sent a present of some cows—was not far away, and she saw him from time to time. The little seaport town was quite gay, there were some pleasant English ladies there, and the air was so healthful and bracing that she was in no hurry to leave. It was there that she heard the news of Pauline's death, which had taken place three days after the date on which she herself had sailed from America. Pauline had recently, it seemed, and as if with a premonition of her approaching end, joined her husband, Prince Camillo Borghese, in Florence, and there she had died, very quietly, with only Jerome at her bedside. (He seemed, Elizabeth thought, to have a *penchant* for death-beds; or were there other reasons?) Pauline was only forty-seven, still lovely, vain and capricious, and perhaps out of all the family, only her mother really, sincerely mourned her. Surprisingly enough, she left Jerome a handsome legacy; to Bo she left twenty thousand francs. It was not very much, Elizabeth thought, but it was better than nothing. She wrote to Lady Morgan telling her of the event. Pauline had died, she said:

Conjugally regretted by Prince Borghese! He

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buried her in the handsomest chapel in Europe. She left a legacy to my son of twenty thousand francs. *Voilà en peu de mots ce que j'ai à dire de la Princesse Pauline.*

She soon, however, had something else to write to Lady Morgan about and to write to her father about, something which drove out of her mind almost everything else, something which kept her awake at nights, tossing and turning and wishing with all her heart that she could cease thinking of it, and never think of it again. Something that was to become, for a while, almost an obsession with her, to the quite serious concern of several of her friends.

The Duke, who, for three years now, had paid Mary the most conspicuous attentions (whence came, Elizabeth had frequently wondered, those handsome jewels which she certainly had not owned until this second visit to Europe?)—had found a husband for her, and that husband was no other than the Duke's own elder brother, Richard, the Marquis of Wellesley, the head of the family. The news was almost unbelievable. Mary, Mary Caton of Baltimore, her own sister-in-law, Mary Patterson, to become the Marchioness of Wellesley!

She wrote to her father—or wrote at him!—in a perfect frenzy of admiring envy:

I write by this packet to announce to you the marriage of Mrs. Robert Patterson. . . . Mrs. Brown received a letter from Betsy Caton on the day on which it was to take place.

She has made the greatest match that any woman ever made, and I suppose that people will see that Mrs. Caton was right in starving (!) her-

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self to keep her daughters in Europe. The Marquis of Wellesley is Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He is sixty-five. He married an opera singer [this was incorrect], by whom he had a family of children. She is dead. He has no fortune; on the contrary he is head over ears in debt. His salary is 30,000 pounds per annum as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. . . . He is the brother of the Duke of Wellington. . . . Mary's fortune is reported in Europe to be 800,000 dollars cash. It has been mentioned in all the papers at that sum. . . . I can only say that if Jerome were a girl and had made such a match I am convinced I should have died of joy.

She meant every word of it. Beside it, even her own marriage paled. She herself had married the brother of Napoleon, Europe's conqueror; Mary had married the brother of Napoleon's conqueror. By means of these two lovely American sisters-in-law, Napoleon and the Duke were brought into relationship. She thought that if Napoleon had been alive and had heard the news he must have smiled.

She was not asked to the wedding, nor would she have gone. Dublin was a long way from Havre, and some of her tart sayings had reached Mary's ears and had caused a still greater coolness. But she presently heard all about it from Lady Morgan, who was there, and who was able to describe to her the almost royal procession through the streets of Dublin, the banquet at Phoenix Park, the ball, that night, at the Rotunda. And she related, too, how Henrietta Johnson, the little black slave who had been given to Mary one Christmas, years ago, and had accompanied the sisters to

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Europe, was much noticed at the wedding, amusing the guests by her eager excitement and her shining black face.

So Mary had outsoared her! Had she been born in some other city, or some other country, the hurt would have been far less, but four beauties from Baltimore was, as Elizabeth had long ago observed, too many; and to be outstripped by one of them was a humiliation hardly to be borne.

Tortured with jealousy, envy, self-pity though she was, she had sufficient philosophy to smile at herself, and to tell herself that this pain, like other pains, would lessen in time. And to take her mind off it, she bought and read—and greatly enjoyed—the scandalous *Memoirs* of Miss Harriet Wilson, which had just reached France. Nothing could better have suited her needs at the moment—and it consoled her, somewhat, that not only was the Duke mentioned in them, but the Marquis of Wellesley as well.

Bo—Elizabeth called him Jerome when she could remember to do so, for he was twenty-one years old—had now received several letters from his father begging him to come to Europe to pay him a visit. Bo looked a little askance at these repeated and urgent invitations, more than suspecting that there were some fresh matrimonial schemes on foot. Nevertheless, he very much wanted to make his father's acquaintance, and as his mother also wished it, on the most practical grounds, he resolved to sail for Europe once more before settling down permanently—as he meant to do—in Baltimore. His father was at present in Rome, and Elizabeth thought Bo could not do better than to join him there, where he would once more be in touch with

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Madame Mère—who was very old now—and Cardinal Fesch.

Knowing that she might have her father's opposition to contend with, Elizabeth wrote to him :

It is the opinion of everyone that I should neglect his interest very much if I do not allow him to be there now that he is old enough to take care of himself, and as I have no wish to go to Rome again I would take the opportunity of going with Mrs. Tussard to Paris to pass the winter. We should be only five days' journey from Rome and I should hear from him every week.

Mr. Astor, she reported at the same time, had succeeded in marrying his daughter to a Mr. Rumph, a German, who represented all the free German towns. Mr. Astor, she said, was delighted with the match. The couple were to live in Paris, and the happy father had settled three hundred thousand dollars on his daughter *for the present*.

"We all think," said Elizabeth, "that she has been very fortunate in getting him, as she has no beauty."

She continued to write to her father, urging Bo's visit, until at last in May, 1826, the young man set sail, arriving safely in Rotterdam after a favourable voyage. There he found letters from his mother instructing him to join her at Lausanne, where she was then staying. After a short stay in Lausanne, they presently journeyed together to Aix, in the Savoie, where Elizabeth had decided to take the waters. Aix and the country round about delighted them, but Bo was not seduced from his loyalty to America, and assured his grandfather in every letter that the more he saw the more firmly he was con-

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vinced of the superiority of his own country, and the more he desired to return to it—and remain in it.

He was soon, now, to see his father, but not in Rome. The situation was peculiar and somewhat delicate. If he were welcomed there, openly, as his father's eldest son, it undoubtedly put Catherine and the children he had by her in a difficult and equivocal position. The King of Würtemberg, her brother, did not approve, though he had met, and greatly admired, Elizabeth herself; and even Madame Mère, fearing that it might cause too much talk, advised Jerome to see his son at a château he owned not far from Siena, rather than in Rome.

So Bo travelled there instead, as soon as the family had had time to set themselves to rights. He was now very eager and very curious to meet the father he had learnt to pity and for whom he had always tried not to feel too much contempt.

The Château Lanciano was typically Italian, and was set on a little hill up which climbed olive and cypress trees. It was a long and exceedingly dusty journey, for though it was late September, no rain had come as yet and the days were still warm. Zinnias still flamed in little gardens, and yellow corn hung drying against the walls of houses, while the oxen toiling along the roads, moved in a perpetual cloud of thick white dust. A carriage sent by his father waited for him in Siena, and he approached the château with a mounting interest and excitement. All the family were assembled indoors—though the day was brilliant and the sky blue as only a Tuscan sky can be. His father first came forward to meet him, and his heart gave a curious little leap of recognition and emotion at the sight of him. Yes, undoubtedly he was this man's son. He found

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himself almost speechless, only able to say: "I'm so glad . . . I'm so glad . . . !" and tears came, most unexpectedly, into his eyes. Jerome also was moved, but he had a tendency, Bo immediately observed, to strike attitudes, which was enough to rob even the sincerest emotions of their effect. As he looked into that weak, once handsome, ageing face, with the tired, dissipated eyes, and the shadow of the Napoleonic look over it all, Bo felt, as he had guessed he would feel, little but pity for him. So many brilliant, so many unique opportunities, and all, all missed!

He hardly heard the little speech of welcome his father made. Realizing that he wished to kiss his forehead, Bo bent his head slightly, as he was the taller of the two.

"And here, my son," Jerome said, "here is your step-mother, the Queen, who has long waited to welcome you."

"Yes, for years, my dear boy," said Catherine, and he turned towards her plump, outstretched hands. "And at last I am able to do so! It is a great pleasure. Your brothers, Jerome and little Napoleon, your little sister, Mathilde . . . we have all looked forward to this moment . . ."

Bo knew that she spoke the truth, and that she was genuinely glad to see him. He liked her at once. Her taste, of course, was terrible. Not even a free negress at a race meeting, he thought, would have been dressed much worse. She wore a bright blue silk dress, of a peculiarly ugly shade, which was strained tightly across her full bosom and trimmed with coarse white lace and lavender bows. So tight was it that a little split had already appeared in a seam at the shoulder, and he got

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the impression that others might show themselves at any moment. The day being warm and the occasion agitating, her face shone with perspiration. Nevertheless, it was a sincere and kindly face, and he liked it, and felt at home with her. Jerome, the elder boy, was twelve, then came Mathilde, a pretty, rather spoilt little girl of six, and then the youngest, Napoleon, a fat child of four with a large face and head, and a sulky expression, the most self-willed child, Bo soon decided, that he had ever met.

It was curious to find himself, even here, in the middle of Italy, once more in the Bonaparte atmosphere, though it was less marked than at Point Breeze. There were already plenty of hangings, table-covers and pictures, however, which showed their Napoleonic origin; and even the children, Bo thought, had the Bonaparte stamp strongly upon them.

When he had washed and changed his clothes he rejoined the family, and they asked him many questions about America, about Baltimore, about his Uncle Joseph and Charlotte, about his travels. Here, too, he found, it was the custom to sit grouped about a centre table, talking—even the two elder children had to endure it—though none of his new relations equalled Charlotte as an inquisitor.

The next day they walked about the estate—there was neither very much to look at there nor much to do—and went for a drive late in the afternoon. Sometimes there were visitors, though not many, and sometimes they drove to neighbouring villas and paid calls. The hours that were kept Bo thought quite extraordinary. No one got up before noon. A long, heavy meal followed; then a short afternoon, barely long enough for a drive

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or a visit; then a big, ceremonial dinner, between six and seven, followed by an interminable evening, no one making a move to go to bed until after midnight, when tea was served. Though the two younger children were put to bed at fairly reasonable hours, little Jerome was frequently allowed to sit up with Bo and his parents, nor did he seem at all inclined to sleep.

What his father enjoyed most, Bo discovered, was to talk of the days when he was King of Westphalia. He believed himself to have been the kindest and most sagacious of rulers, and blamed his subjects for all his difficulties. "No king," he said, "ever reigned over a more thankless kingdom!" (Which was precisely what his brother Joseph had frequently said of Spain.) He liked to describe, too, the part he had played in the battle of Waterloo, which interested Bo, who had heard little of it. At no other battle, indeed, had Jerome acquitted himself so well, and he liked to tell how Napoleon had embraced him, crying, "Now, for the first time, I know my brother!"

Only once, during the visit to Lanciano, did Jerome refer to his desertion of Bo's mother.

"You are old enough now," he said, not without some embarrassment, "to realize, I hope, that I had no choice but to act as I did, *vis-à-vis* your mother. There was no alternative. I trust you understand this. I could not, I could not, have done otherwise."

It was a difficult moment for Bo.

"At least I think I understand," he said, "why you took the course you did take."

The weary eyes shot a quick look at him, but saw nothing to suggest that Bo meant more or less than he said.

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There was not a strong line, Bo thought, in his father's face. There were fine, criss-crossed lines, indicative of follies and dissipations. He had to form his own judgments about this, for his mother had never told him more than the bare outlines of his father's life, nor had she ever tried to prejudice him in any way. Looking at him now, Bo could guess how fair she had been.

When the colder weather came on, they urged him to accompany them to Rome. It was now well known in Rome, Jerome said, that he was with them, and he thought it unlikely that further comments would be made.

"My mother," he said, "will have prepared the minds of friends and relations for our meeting. I think we may rest assured that there will be little or no gossip."

Bo was not sorry when the whole family, with a large retinue of servants, set out, finally, for Rome. The rains had come, and as no one but himself ever dreamt of going out of doors except in fine weather, the hours spent sitting about a table, either talking or eating, were boring and interminable. They had taught him to play a game called reversi—a game Napoleon had often played—and he had tried to teach little Jerome to play chess, but it was very dull, and in Rome at least there would be plenty to do. He could see his grandmother; he could see some of his mother's friends. Anything would be better, he thought, than Lanciano.

Elizabeth was now in Florence with Madame Tussard; she had at last found the place where, above all the places she had ever seen, she was most content. The beauty and mellowness of Florence enchanted her; she never tired of the palazzos, the churches, the pictures,

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the statues, the gardens. Everything satisfied her eye and her mind. She and Madame Tussard shared an apartment in an old house overlooking the brown Arno, and though the winter promised to be cold and rainy, and there were frequent fogs, Elizabeth wished to be nowhere else. Frederick III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who had been ousted by Napoleon and replaced by Elisa Bacciochi and her husband, had returned, after Napoleon's downfall, but had now been succeeded by his son, Leopold II, and this still-young Grand Duke often invited Elizabeth to his Court and was kindness itself to her, on several occasions showing her so much attention and favour that she was deeply touched. Prince Demidoff was there; the English Ambassador, Lord Burghersh, gave a ball once a week; the Russian Minister, M. Svartzkoff, kept open house on a lavish scale, and Elizabeth dined out or went to a ball almost nightly, and in fact counted that day lost which did not end in this way.

Meanwhile, Bo, she thought, was happy enough with his relations, though he wrote that he would be glad when the visit came to an end. He got on well enough with them all, liked young Jerome, and, being naturally fond of children, enjoyed the society of little Mathilde, but the four-year-old Napoleon he longed to spank. He had never seen, he said, such a headstrong, badly behaved child.

"My step-mother," he wrote, "is always most kind and agreeable and tries to make me feel at home, but this is not the way to live, and if I stay here much longer I shall form all sorts of luxurious and lazy habits, quite unsuited to me and to the sort of life I wish to lead."

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Like Point Breeze, it was a house in which there was nothing to do but to kill time. Young Jerome appeared to be without ambition, and the atmosphere was far from conducive to effort of any sort. Bo tried to study, but gave it up, and contented himself, after a while, with sightseeing, and with observing the customs and habits of the people about him. "I suppose," he said to himself, "I am not wholly wasting my time." He found the social life dull and stiff, and made no new friends. Rome seemed to be gay just once a year, and that was at Carnival time, which was presently upon them. Then the sights in the streets delighted him, and he was allowed to take little Jerome out one day, both of them masked, and throw confetti and sugar-plums with the rest of the crowd. They watched, too, the race of riderless horses, pricked almost to frenzy with small nails, but he thought it cruel and pointless, though it was exciting enough. One night his father, feeling in a royal and Westphalian mood, gave a ball, and all the smart folk of Rome attended it. Bo was introduced to several ladies—none of them either very attractive or very young—by his father, who whispered to him that they were highly desirable from the matrimonial point of view, and that he had only to make his choice. It was a difficult evening for him on this account, for he was aware, the entire evening, that his father's eye was upon him. He was glad, on the whole, when it was over, and the next day he slipped off to pay a visit to Madame Mère.

He was much struck by her feebleness, and she seemed to him to be failing fast. He liked her far the best of all his relations; she and his cousin Charles, the son of Uncle Lucien (who had braved Napoleon's anger

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and a lengthy exile rather than be parted from his wife), were the two with whom he got on best. Charles was keenly interested in science and in ornithology, and had been married to his cousin, Zenaïde, for four years. These two seemed to him very real and very human people. Their motives, aspirations, points of view, were intelligible to him, and he was happy with them.

That day, Madame Mère received him with great affection. She made him sit close beside her, for her eyesight was failing and she liked to look into his face. It struck him one day that in each one of her sons and daughters, and their sons and daughters, she found something of Napoleon, and he wondered if, perhaps, among them all, between them all, she could build up again that son who was more to her than all of them. "She loves to look at me," he thought, "because I resemble him a little. She loves to listen to Uncle Louis because his voice reminds her of Napoleon's voice. And so on, and so on." But, however true this might have been, she had a genuine affection for Bo, and there was no one whose visits gave her greater pleasure.

"You are good to come and see an old woman," she said, more than once. "My memories are not always happy ones, and what have we old people left but memories?" And when he left, she kissed him very tenderly, murmuring, "Good-bye, my son, good-bye, my dear, dear son."

When the time came for him to join his mother in Florence, his father seemed loath to let him go.

"You must marry in Europe, my son, and live in Europe," he said, a hand on Bo's shoulder.

"That," said Bo, smiling, "is what my mother wishes

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too, but not what I wish. At the moment, I don't want to marry at all, but if I do, whoever she is, I would prefer to live in America."

"That is not the way, my son, to advance your fortunes. We must make plans for you. It is a pity that your cousin, Napoleone Bacciochi, married a short time ago. I had always hoped you two might come together. It would have been advantageous."

"I want to be something on my own account," said Bo. "I mean to go home soon and study law, and marriage here would put an end to all that. I want to live like an ordinary citizen—which I consider I am—pay my debts" (did his father wince? Jerome's debts, Bo knew, were about three times as great as his income), "and make my own way in the world. Above all, I never want to live in a style I cannot maintain."

Jerome let his hand drop from his son's shoulder.

"You show a poor spirit, my boy," he said. "There are half a dozen ladies here—you have met them—who could bring you wealth and position. You have only to show a willingness to play your part. You are handsome enough to marry whom you please." He smiled. "After all, are you not my son?"

He had been glad to leave the Château Lanciano for Rome. He was even more glad to leave Rome for Florence. His mother was very well satisfied to have him with her again and thought he had benefited greatly by his visits.

They spent three very happy months together, and she did not plague him in any way. Marriage was seldom mentioned, and they spent their time driving about the country-side, visiting friends, watching the sunsets from Fiesole or San Miniato, looking at pictures,

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exploring churches. Mary's marriage had by now lost much of its sting, and Elizabeth's health had never been better. Jerome thought her lovelier than ever. It was sad, he thought, that he saw her so little. He had a father with whom he had little in common, and whom he was unlikely, he thought, to see more than once or twice again, and a mother who could not exist in her native country. For anyone like himself, with strong domestic affections, these were misfortunes.

When he said good-bye to her his heart felt very heavy, as though, by some intuition, he knew that it would be a long time before he saw her again. But in her fine soulless dark eyes there were no tears. They had had a happy time together. Now he must go home and work if he were so foolish as not to marry and live in Europe. In a year or two she would be in America herself, for she must go back and look after her interests there.

"Good-bye, my son. Be careful of money. Tell your grandfather that I was never happier nor more attended to. Write to me often."

She continued to live in Florence very contentedly. The beauty of the place had laid a spell upon her. She was in love with it. No one was so sought after and so frequently entertained. Indeed, so much sought after was she, that even the news of Louisa's marriage did not wound her as it would otherwise have done. For Louisa had married the eldest son of the Duke of Leeds. She was the Marchioness of Carmarthen, and would some day be the first American Duchess.

"Mrs. Caton," Elizabeth wrote to her father, "has been more fortunate in fixing her children than I can hope to be. I think they are the most fortunate people

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I ever heard of. Louisa has made a great match. He is very handsome, not more than twenty-eight, and will be a Duke with thirty thousand pounds a year." And she added, "The Duke of Leeds, they say, is *of course* very angry at his son's marriage with Louisa. His daughter ran off a few months ago with a man who has not a shilling."

She had rather flimsy evidence, it is to be feared, for her statement concerning the Duke's anger. There was little reason for any father to object to Louisa, who was rich, charming and desirable, unless, possibly, on the grounds that she was an American. But though visiting Englishmen—and women—were travelling to the United States and writing angry books about it for home consumption, the fact remained that Americans were enjoying a growing popularity in England. For once the English had got over the shock of finding them civilized, well-mannered and well-educated, and, moreover, with white skins instead of red, they were prepared to take them to their hearts.

Before long, Elizabeth was to receive yet another shock. Elizabeth Caton became the wife of George William, eighth Baron Stafford, a slightly less brilliant match than her sisters had made, but brilliant enough. It was only possible, now, to think well of Emily, the youngest, who had the decency and good taste to stay quietly at home and marry a man named John McTavish, who was the British Consul in Baltimore.

But Bo would yet, she hoped and believed, delight her and repay her for all that she had done for him by making a marriage which, if it could not put these into the shade, would yet be so advantageous that it would set him up for life.

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Meanwhile, there was little to sadden or worry her but the death of Prince Demidoff, a friend she could ill spare. She missed him greatly; never was there a house at which she was more welcome; never was there a warmer, better friend. But she was philosophical now, about death, as she was about few other things, and she bore it with resignation. So that, on the whole, she was living happily enough in Florence, with a mind at peace, when she received a letter from her father, bluntly telling her of Bo's engagement. She was in the apartment alone, with only the Italian servant, Angelina. As she read the letter, it seemed to her that something snapped in her brain. She screamed aloud, as if a knife had been driven into her breast. Angelina came running in, and seeing her standing there with a letter in her hand, did not know what to do. She had thought someone must be attacking the signora, but there she was, quite alone, with a white and terrible face, screaming. She hardly dared go to her. Her son, then, was dead, *povra signora!* There was nothing else to make a woman scream and look as the signora screamed and looked. Then Elizabeth's knees gave suddenly, she fell heavily to the floor, and Angelina feared her no longer. She knew, now, what to do. She rushed for water, for smelling salts, for burnt feathers. She managed to lift her on to her bed. "Signora! Signora! Death comes to us all. I too, I have lost a child. I know what it is. Ah, *dio mio!* Open your eyes! If only I could leave her to get the doctor! How white she is, like a dead woman herself! *Dio mio!* I am frightened. People die of such shocks. Such a beautiful young man he was. Ah! Heaven be praised! Here comes the Signora Tussard."

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For days Angelina mourned for Bo. In her church she said a prayer for him. She tended the signora devotedly. The doctor said she must be kept very quiet, very quiet, and she allowed no one to come near. It was from the Signora Tussard, at last, that she heard her mistake. The young man was not dead. He was going to be married. By this time he was perhaps already married. The Italian stared, exclaimed, shook her head. The American lady, then, was mad? That, she thought, could be the only explanation.

For days, as she lay in the darkened room, these words repeated themselves in Elizabeth's anguished brain: Susan May Williams, Susan May Williams. Over and over again, those three unpretentious names. Susan, May, Williams. A Bonaparte had married—for by now he was probably married—a person named Susan May Williams. Susan May. That combination, when she was able to think, told her much. She imagined a young mother, rocking a child on her knee and saying, "I'm going to call my baby Susan May. Don't you think it sweet? Susan for my Aunt Susie Deakins, and May for Cousin May Thompson." She could see Susan May's whole family, their surroundings, habits, tastes, points of view. She knew them, through and through and through. As if there were anything about a Susan May Williams it was not easy to know! The cruelty of it! The ingratitude! The ingratitude! The cruelty! All her life long she had struggled, pinched, sacrificed herself—for this! For a Susan May Williams. A sweet American daughter, like thousands of other sweet American daughters, dressed in muslin, sitting on a porch. Sweet-voiced, sweet-eyed; clever at making little quips, which her

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young men admirers thought clever. Able to sew nicely; able to make a cake or a rum punch. Able to help her mother; able to play the piano, just the littlest bit. Plenty of young men, no doubt, had sat on that vine-screened porch, plenty of young men, and out of them all she had chosen Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the Emperor, nephew of the conqueror of Europe. Something seemed to go crack in her brain again. "I shall go mad. This is the way people go mad. I shall kill myself. There is no other remedy for this pain. Susan May Williams. Damn her! Yes, damn her, damn her, damn her! She has ruined my son. She has ruined my son's whole life. She has ruined my life. Any of the others would have done as well. But she chose Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte. Damn her! "

"The doctor says you must be very quiet, dear," said Madame Tussard, looking cool in the black she always wore. "You must lie still. You will tire yourself out. Try to be quiet."

"There is one way to make me quiet. Pick up that chair and dash my brains out. If you were a friend, if you were a friend, you would do it." And she cried out, aloud this time, "Damn her! Damn her! "

The Italian doctor bled her, he dosed her, then he bled her again. But she went on crying, "Damn her, damn her! " They grew seriously concerned.

All the Bonapartes wrote charming letters to Bo when they heard of the engagement. Doubtless some of them were relieved. "Now," they may have thought, "he will become a simple American citizen. It is just as well. His presence in Europe was a trifle

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embarrassing. All has turned out for the best. Moreover it appears that he need no longer look to any of us for financial help."

I am put quite at my ease [wrote his father] by knowing that you have the assent of my dear brother [Joseph] and that the marriage has been brought about by the good and worthy Mr. Patterson. I learn with pleasure what your grandfather has done for you in order to assure your fortune and that your future wife is rich and is endowed with all good qualities. . . . Now, the most natural thing for you to do is to be really, truly and without reserve, an American citizen. [Advice which Jerome himself had once refused to follow.] You will certainly find yourself, in that position, happier in every way than your brothers and sister. [He scolded Bo for not having written to Catherine as well, who had shown him so many kindnesses. But he added in a postscript:] The Queen desires to be affectionately remembered to you.

Charlotte, now married to her cousin, Napoleon Louis, Louis Bonaparte's second son, wrote a nice letter of congratulation.

I hope [she said] that you have not forgotten me entirely, though your correspondence has been a little negligent. Adieu. Napoleon sends you many messages and I once more assure you of my own affection.

She had improved very much since her marriage, which, apparently, was turning out well enough, the only difficulty being that Joseph, her father, seemed dis-

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inclined to pay the money he had agreed to pay by way of a marriage settlement.

Bo postponed his wedding from month to month, hoping that his mother would forgive him and consent to come, but she refused. Neither would she write to him. She was calmer now, but it was not the sort of calm that brings peace of mind. It was an icy, bitter calm, a sort of blight. All her natural feelings, all her hopes and affections, seemed to have been blackened and withered. She now lived, defiantly, for herself alone.

To her father she wrote that the marriage, if it took place, must take place without her. "As the woman has money," she flung at him, "I will no longer oppose it." And as an afterthought, for she was thinking of settlements, "they ought to have given him half of her fortune at least if he outlives her."

More and more she wrote *at* her father, rather than *to* him. Letters were flung angrily, bitterly, across the Atlantic. "Take this," she seemed to say, "and this, and this! "

As Robert had once truly said, "They ought never to have met."

Her father, she believed, had cheated her of her son. But at least she could still write to him. To her son, she could not write at all.

CHAPTER XVI

ELIZABETH now concerned herself solely with her own affairs. It was as though she had whistled home all her cares and loves for Bo and chained them up to starve. To Miss Spear she wrote quite frequently about financial matters or sent messages to Miss Spear through her father. She was planning, planning now, for her own future. She was convinced that she would have a long life—if the epidemic of cholera that was threatening Europe would spare her—and if that life were to be comfortable, she must look well to her stocks and bonds. She brought to bear upon these things an intelligence that was like that of a trained and experienced man of affairs.

I agree with you that my money ought to be placed in the most permanent funds and those which offer the greatest security for the future. If the five per cents of the City of Baltimore and the five per cents of the State of Maryland offer sufficient guarantees for the safety of capital invested and regular payment of its interests, I can perceive no objection to Miss Spear purchasing them for me. . . . My opinion founded on your statement of the moneyed concerns of Baltimore is that my floating capital should be divided into *three* parts; *one* to be invested in five per cents of the city; *one* to be invested in five per cents of the State; the other *third* to be equally divided—*one half* in ground rents, and the other half let out as at present. [Safety, she went on to say, was the first

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consideration.] Therefore I will not indulge in the inclination I have always felt to gamble in French funds. [This required considerable strength of mind, for French funds, since the revolution of 1830, had fallen sharply.]

And yet, allied to this masculine grasp of financial matters, this most unusual capacity for wise investment and timely buying and selling, went a nature wholly feminine in the *quality* of its vanity, its pride and its vulnerability. Apart from business, she possessed, not every feminine virtue, it was true, but at least every feminine weakness but one. She was not in the least emotionally susceptible. *Les plaisirs de la chair* made no appeal to her at all. She was as chaste as an elderly prioress. And this in spite of the fact that she was still lovely and still sought after, though she gave the amorously inclined male so little encouragement that few had the temerity to make love to her. It was all too clear to them that what delighted her were attention and intellectual companionship. Gorchakov, the Russian chargé d'affaires (Prince Alexander Mikhailovitch Gorchakov, to give him his full name, which Elizabeth usually did, in her letters), certainly fell in love with her. He thought he saw in those fine dark eyes with their beautifully marked brows, something which led him to hope that here, at last, was the woman who combined in her person all the emotions, charms and talents he had hitherto only found in twenty women. But he learnt his mistake soon enough, and learnt to value her for what she was. It was enormously to her credit that she was able to form firm friendships with such men, who, more often than not, had never

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dreamt of a friendship with any woman who was not undesirable as a mistress, or over sixty.

It was in Florence that a strange, unexpected thing happened. It was in the early days of her stay there, when she went, one afternoon, with a friend to see the pictures at the Pitti Palace. It was a fine, bright day, and she had promised to go, later, to an afternoon reception at the house of the British Ambassador. She was wearing a pretty new gown, and over it a silk cloak, which, as was the fashion with cloaks, completely hid her figure, so that from the back, she might have been twenty or sixty. The gown underneath, however, was youthful enough, and was made with the shorter, fuller skirt that women were then wearing, showing the ankles and feet. Her large Leghorn hat was tied under the chin with a ribbon of a shade of greenish grey, to match the cloak.

She had paused to admire the Madonna del Sedia, by Raphael, and her friend, an American lady, had walked on into the next room. Turning away at length to follow her, Elizabeth found herself face to face with two people, a man and a woman, who had come near to look at the same picture. The man's appearance was familiar to her, but it was a second or so before she realized that she was face to face, for the first time in twenty-six years, with Jerome. It was a great shock to her. What had folly and the unkind years not done to him? And could that stout, dowdily dressed woman be Catherine? But she knew, beyond any real doubt, that it was. Elizabeth's brain, as always in crises, worked quickly. She gave no sign of recognition, but opened her cloak, carelessly, and threw it back. They should see what a pretty, youthful figure was hidden beneath it, that charming

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figure that Jerome had once so adored. And so she passed them, without a quiver in her face. And as once, long ago, she had heard Jerome say, "*Voilà ma belle femme,*" she now heard him whisper loudly to Catherine, "That was my first wife!"

Now, long after this, she heard that they were coming to live in Florence; the Austrian government having given them permission to do so. If Westphalia had not been large enough to hold two queens, certainly Florence was not large enough to hold two wives. Its social world was tiny, and anyone moving in it met the same people again and again. As she had no wish to repeat the experience of that afternoon, Elizabeth made her plans, very reluctantly, to leave the city, where she had spent five happy years. It was sad, particularly, to leave Gorchakov, who had never bored her for one instant. Lamartine, with whom she had also become extremely friendly—though she was never so friendly with his dull English wife—had already gone, but there were quite twenty people in Florence she would be really sorry to leave. And to leave Florence itself cost her many a pang. But it had to be, and she made her plans to go to Geneva, to which city Princess Galitzin was ready to accompany her, sharing the expenses of the carriage journey. The Princess and Lady Morgan were perhaps the best women friends Elizabeth was ever to have. She was sincerely attached to both of them; both were clever, *sympathique*, and delightful companions.

When the news reached her that Bo had a son, she sent him no word at all. She had not forgiven him, and she saw no reason why she should melt simply because one more wretched little being was added to the millions already in the world. Although she had discontinued

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Bo's allowance, she considered that she had treated him very fairly because she had not cut him out of her will. No parent, she maintained, had a right to disinherit a child.

"I would leave him everything," she said, "if he had attempted to cut my throat and had failed in the attempt." And she meant it, because she really believed that the hurts inflicted by lack of money were bound to be more keenly felt and to cause more suffering than those inflicted by lack of love.

But the Bonaparte relations all wrote to him when his son was born, Madame Mère with real feeling.

MY DEAR SON,

I have heard with great pleasure of the birth of your first-born. I offer my best wishes that he may continue well and be a subject of great happiness to you.

Receive my maternal benediction and never doubt the tenderness I feel for you and also for your son. Give my affectionate regards to your wife. I embrace you with all the affection of a good and tender mother.

MADAME.

There was enough love in her heart for all of them, even unto the third and fourth generation.

But Elizabeth's alienation from Bo left an enormous gap in her life. She could not fill it. She took more interest than ever in her personal appearance, spurred on by Princess Galitzin, who was for ever reminding her that she was one of the loveliest of women. "Much good it has done me," Elizabeth would say, but it had its effect, and she presently sent to America for some

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jewels she had left there, and wrote to a friend asking, somewhat imperiously, for some white topazes, which she proposed to pass off as diamonds. The Princess had a tiara which served a treble duty; it could be worn on the head, about the neck or at the waist, and Elizabeth amused herself by having her jewels reset, in order to make a similar ornament. But something had gone out of life; that for which she had lived and planned had been snatched from her—a brilliant future for her son—and now there was little left.

"I doze away existence," she said. "I am too old to coquet, and without this stimulant I die with ennui. . . . I am tired of life and tired of having lived."

In the summer, Princess Galitzin lived in a country house she had recently bought outside Geneva, and she sent the carriage each week for Elizabeth, who passed two days with her. Elizabeth envied her the possession of this estate as a home, as she envied her (though she did not covet him) Prince Galitzin as a husband. He had a hundred private interests and let his wife do much as she pleased. All her friends, she thought, were more fortunate than she. She had no one—only the most ungrateful of sons.

The following winter she was in Paris, moving, as usual, in the highest circles, but descending now and again to lower levels to spend a pleasant hour or two with an occasional American friend who could talk to her of things and persons at home. Sometimes she felt the sharp pang of something very like homesickness, but fought it down. It was an illusion, only an illusion. She had no home there; where indeed, had she a home, unless it was in her fast accumulating trunks and boxes?

It was in Paris at this time that she met a woman who

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greatly interested her. Elizabeth could see at a glance that she had never been a beauty, but she was so alert, so quick of eye and of mind that, merely seeing her in a large gathering and hearing her talk, she wished to meet her, and asked for an introduction.

"You," she said, offering her hand and smiling, "are the Laure Permon about whom, years ago, Jerome Bonaparte used to talk to me; especially of the days when you played together in the Tuileries. I feel I know you so very well."

A look of enormous interest and pleasure flashed into the other woman's face—of intense eagerness, as if here, at last, was a moment she had long waited for.

"You are *not* Madame Jerome Bonaparte? But impossible! Impossible that at last, *at last* I am so fortunate as to meet you! Ah, but this is extraordinary! This is enchanting! I heard you were in Paris, and was making inquiries. In Rome, alas! we had not the good fortune to meet. But, now, now at last fate has brought us together."

"You may imagine, perhaps, how delighted I am," said Elizabeth, as they moved away together to find a quiet corner, "for I have just read your *Memoirs*."

"Ah! you have already read them? Good! Good! "

"You may also imagine," Elizabeth went on, "how quickly I turned to those pages where I was mentioned."

"But if I had only met you before—how much more I could have said! "

Elizabeth laughed.

"Then perhaps it is just as well that we only meet now."

"But you like what I said? You approve? "

"But naturally. For of me you said nothing but what

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was flattering and kind. You are a brave woman. I wonder that you had the courage to publish it while so many of the people you write about are among your readers. I would never have dared."

The Duchesse d'Abrantés shrugged her shoulders.

"I have lost everything, already. Friends, money, position . . . what does it matter?"

That she was wildly extravagant and had spent all her fortune, Elizabeth knew. And she knew, too, that, though she was delighted to meet her, there was little likelihood of friendship between them. A woman who would throw money away foolishly, wildly, was not at all to her taste. They could have little in common.

"You describe everything," Elizabeth said, "very modestly and discreetly. That I greatly admired. Even though the Emperor was in love with you, you make little of it, while other women would have made it the most important subject in the book."

"In love with me? Because he came into my bedroom and pinched my toes? Bah! I think nothing of that. At the time I did, yes, because I was frightened. He held Junot and myself in the hollow of his hand. But in love—he loved a hundred women in that way."

Nevertheless, Elizabeth was convinced that Napoleon had, in his way, been in love with this woman, and she thought, "If he could have loved her . . . suppose that he had met me. . . ?"

The Duchess pressed her to come and see her. "I wish very much," she said, "to know you better. And apart from the fact that I desire your friendship, I hope you will tell me all the circumstances of your marriage. Everything, everything that you will."

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"For another book?" Elizabeth asked warily.

"Perhaps. I do not promise. But it interests me extremely—but extremely."

Elizabeth shook her head. "I cannot promise that," she said. "You have already spoken enough ill of Jerome and far more good of me than I deserve. I will tell you nothing, Duchesse. Do you still wish me to come?"

"Not as much as I did," said the Duchess, laughing, and when she laughed her shrewd, sharp eyes almost vanished in their wrinkles. "But of course, of course! And I promise I will not tease you. You know that we met, Jerome, my husband and I—but I speak of it in my book—at Talavera de la Reina, at the inn? I remember your face in the miniature as though it were yesterday. I told him he would be a fool to give you up. Whether or not you were fortunate in having been given up by him is another matter. Myself, I think you were."

She saw the Duchess on a number of occasions, but though they were always glad to meet, the friendship did not grow. There was something too unpractical, too slipshod about the widow of Junot for Elizabeth's taste. And talking with her was a trifle dangerous. Nevertheless, the acquaintance was one that she valued. It had a significance and a flavour all its own.

But she found that she took less and less interest in strangers, in balls, soirées, dinners; (though dinners were fewer now; probably there had never been more dinners in Paris than in the days when the British swarmed there; in the good old days of the Duke). Everything seemed a little flat, a little pointless. "By this time," she often thought, "I would have found for Bo some

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good diplomatic appointment. With my help and influence he might one day have been ambassador to the Court of St. James's." But better not think of these things. Her financial affairs needed her attention, unless she were to become like the Duchesse d'Abrantés, and it was time she went to America. Could it possibly be, too, that she wished to see her son . . . perhaps her son's wife . . . perhaps even her grandson? (She a grandmother! It was a little absurd!) "I suppose," she thought, "that if I go to Baltimore, I must see them. Not to do so would be to give publicity to family matters that are better kept private." It was her way of covering up, even from her own eyes, her longing to see Bo. She wrote to her father, after a silence of over a year, that she thought of sailing for America in June. In due course, she received a letter from him, so typical of him that she smiled as she read it.

. . . Time brings about what we have little expected, and sweet home and natural intercourse and connection with our family is, after all, the only chance of happiness in this world. We are in great confusion and distress in this country, on account of President Jackson's arbitrary conduct in respect to the bank of the United States. There is no saying how it may end, or that it may not ultimately bring about a revolution. Your presence here is absolutely necessary to look after your affairs and property, and the sooner the better. We will all endeavour to make you as comfortable as we can.

I am, dear Betsy, yours very sincerely,
W.P.

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Paris, in any case, was not what it was. When gouty old Louis XVIII passed into the grave, there passed with him many of the associations that, for some time, had meant Paris to Elizabeth. The jokes, the little sayings, the gossip, the whole atmosphere was one to which she had grown accustomed, and which she had come to look upon as part of Parisian life. No more Madame du Cayla, least lovely of favourites! The Gallatins were no longer there, nor their circle of friends. She missed Madame de Staël, she missed a hundred things and persons, and above all, the gaiety and excitement and *verve* of the earlier days of the Restoration. She had watched, from Florence, the career of Charles X—she had had some caustic things to say of it—and the Revolution of 1830, and now, here was Louis Philippe, a middle-class king with an umbrella, who shook hands with all and sundry in the palace like any American President in the White House. He was not at all to her taste. But Paris shops were still a delight, and she bought no less than twelve bonnets and any number of dresses and wraps and accessories. For who could tell when she would be in Paris again?

She took out of storage some boxes that had been for years reposing there, and collecting all her possessions, departed. It is doubtful if any private person travelling to America ever travelled with such an accompaniment of luggage. James Gallatin, who had always been amazed at the number of articles she brought into their house in Paris, would have opened his eyes very wide. The Gallatins were now in New York. Mr. Gallatin's long diplomatic career had come to an end, and he had now turned banker. There was no one in America she

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more eagerly looked forward to seeing.

It was a sad crossing for her. She felt that she was leaving behind her all that made her life worth living (if only her conditions had made it possible for her to take full advantage of her opportunities!) All, all, she felt, that was lovely, all that was diverting, all that was stimulating, was receding behind the curved rim of ocean, while awaiting her was the American seaboard, with its undistinguished buildings and its undistinguished inhabitants.

"I feel," she wrote to Gorchakov, "like an animal that goes home to die."

But in fact, she felt very little like dying. Her vitality, no doubt, was suffering a temporary eclipse, but she believed that she would presently regain it.

She discussed with the Captain, who took great care that she should be comfortable, the possibility of crossing the Atlantic by steam, but he was not optimistic. It was true that steam-driven ships were plying, irregularly and most uneconomically, between England and Lisbon, but he thought that owing to the expense, and the vast amount of coal that had to be carried, the attempt would have to be given up.

"The good Lord," he said, for he was a religious man, "gave us the winds to use. And as long as I am Captain of a ship, madam, I shall use them."

"But surely," said Elizabeth, "if we did nothing but what the good Lord appeared to mean us to do, we should still have been living in the Garden of Eden."

She found New York a good deal changed. The old wooden houses were fast disappearing; all now was brick, brick, brick, bright, raw and red, or covered, perhaps, with yellow paint, but always bright, with

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polished door-knobs, railings, and clean white marble steps. She arrived almost at the foot of Wall Street, where a great crowd of vessels lay, and arranging for her piles of luggage to follow her to the Gallatins', where she proposed to spend a few days, she took a carriage with the things she would immediately require, and set out. She was amazed at the enormous growth of the traffic. The streets—particularly Broadway—were full of red-painted buses, plying to and fro, to and fro, and always, it seemed, crowded to overflowing. The streets, in fact, were as crowded as London or Paris streets, with phaetons and gigs and tilburys, and private vehicles, some shoddy and shabby, some new and smart. It was pleasant to see negro coachmen again, and indeed there were many things to strike her eye agreeably enough. The women dressed even more gaily than in Europe, and gave colour even to the more drab and unlovely quarters. But the same good taste, she thought, was lacking. There was too obviously a desire to attract attention.

And the pigs! The pigs that had grunted and rooted for orange peel about the feet of Jerome and herself in their honeymoon days, were still here; the natural scavengers of the city. These she noted with disgust; also that the habit of spitting had by no means been overcome. Well, she had expected to find plenty of crudeness and ugliness, and on the whole, things looked better than she had expected; and as she drove up Broadway, lined with weary-looking young poplars, her heart lightened a little. Perhaps life would be bearable, at least. Then there was suddenly a great shouting and ringing of bells and a noise of horses' hoofs ringing wildly on the stones, and a fire engine nearly crashed

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into her carriage on its headlong flight to the scene of some fire. "Really," she thought, "have I returned from Europe to lose my life in this fashion?" But in a moment, all was calm again.

The Gallatins were unchanged; as kindly, as friendly, as delighted to see her as ever, and she would have stayed longer with them, but that her affairs, she suspected, urgently needed her attention. So on to Baltimore she went, preferring to go by coach rather than by water, and got into the huge wide public diligence with Mr. Gallatin to see her off.

The early summer in Baltimore had its charms, too. She looked again with pleasure upon the dignified old houses sheltered by trees, the shady roads, the flowers, the girls in muslin sitting on their porches, the coloured street pedlars crying their wares in the most melodious voices to be heard anywhere in the world. And then she saw the old house in South Street at last, and found her father nodding in his library.

He welcomed her with formal dignity. He had become an old man, but he recognized the fact and was at home in his changed estate. She perceived a certain feebleness in his walk, it was a tremulous hand that held open the doors for her, and there was less force, less emphasis in his speech. His flesh had fallen away somewhat, and he no longer filled his blue coat and white waistcoat as stoutly as before. Between his body and his clothes there was a lessened intimacy.

When her luggage arrived, he was startled, and sent some of it away to his warehouses. How could one woman require so much?

"The harvest of a good many years, father," Elizabeth said.

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He thought she was looking extremely well, and saw no change in her, though he forbore to make personal comments, thinking that whatever he said, he might displease her. Also he had reached an age which sees things from a more timeless view-point, and is unaware of small alterations. She rustled a good deal, she was fashionably dressed, she used a great many foreign words, she seemed to be in good health. It was the same Betsy.

Bo, he said, was waiting to receive her in his own home, and was sending a carriage for her the next morning.

"He thought," he explained, "that I might like you to myself to-day."

"Shall I have to see that woman?"

"Your daughter-in-law," he replied, with a frown of disapproval, "will, I rather think, be with her mother."

She did not ask him about her grandchild. She did not wish to show so much interest.

Bo had bought himself a moderate-sized house and estate beyond the town. He had become a country gentleman, and all his interests, it seemed, were now bound up in his home. Oh, how different from all that she had planned for him! When she saw him running down the steps to meet her, having heard the noise of the carriage wheels in the drive, love, regret, bitterness, took her by the throat. She did not know which emotion was strongest, she only knew that she could scarcely speak. He was so unmistakably a Bonaparte. *What was he doing in this backwater?* But he was her child, her son, and when he took her in his arms, it was as a mother that she kissed him, and the tears crowded into her eyes.

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There were tears in his, too, and he brushed them away with the back of his hand. It seemed strange to hear this man, so mature now, call her "mamma", but the habit still persisted, and it pleased her, for it made her feel that she still had authority over him.

"I thought," he said, brokenly, "that I was never to see you again, mamma. You've forgiven me, haven't you? Tell me you've forgiven me. I loved her. I love her very much. I wanted no one else. Say you have forgiven me. It would make me so happy. You don't know how I've missed you."

She gave a half-sarcastic, half-dubious little laugh.

"Missed me? I don't believe it. Surely my daughter-in-law would never allow that."

"Mamma . . . I've missed you terribly. You seemed so far away . . . so out of reach. I can't tell you what it means to me to see you again. And as beautiful as ever! Not a day seems to have passed over your head. How do you do it? Oh!"—he kissed her again—"one doesn't love so many people that one can spare the best-loved of all."

There was no withstanding such tenderness, such sweetness. It worked upon her. She felt her hardness dissolving, and held up her face for yet another kiss of reconciliation.

"We forgive each other, then? It is all forgiven and forgotten? But, oh, after all those years of struggling and hoping . . . you'll never know how *cruel* . . . like a stab in the back. . . . How could you? I am an old woman now. It has broken me. I have no ambition left. I have just crawled home to die."

He had to laugh at this. "You don't know how funny that sounds. Forgive me. Let me feast my eyes

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upon you again. I haven't seen such a well-dressed woman since I left Florence. Tell me what the journey from New York was like. Were the hotels as uncomfortable as ever? "

They talked of the journey, they talked, presently, of Mr. Patterson.

"He is failing fast, Bo. You realize that? "

"There's no denying it, I'm afraid. But he's splendid. Never a complaint."

There was a sound in the hall and she turned her head.

"It's Sue," he said, lowering his voice. "She's just going out with little Jerome. I didn't know whether . . ."

"It might as well be now as later," said Elizabeth. "Ask her to come in."

At one glance, Elizabeth knew her daughter-in-law, accepted her, and, in a sense, approved of her. A nice, sensible woman, and no rival. And no fool, either. And well off. It might have been far worse. She offered her cheek to her, then stooped to the boy.

"He looks like you, my son. Another Bonaparte. Susan, my bag is just there, on the table. If you open it for me you'll find a toy I brought the child from Paris, where they know how to make toys. Here you are, my dear. A little French peasant boy for you to play with. See, he nods his head. Yes, yes, it's yours, take it, take it. And remember, it came all the way from Paris, and if you break it, you cannot get another. Moreover, it cost me eighteen francs."

Everything, now, was easy and comfortable enough. She had made no speeches to Susan, and Susan had made none to her. That would have been impossible.

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But Susan could hardly take her eyes off her mother-in-law. She was fascinated by her. The child, a handsome little boy with thick dark hair and large, intelligent dark eyes, played with the toy and amused himself quietly enough. He was very sturdily built and held himself very erect, thrusting out his little chest. His parents and Elizabeth talked, and their talk flowed meaninglessly over his head. Never, Susan thought, listening rather than talking, could such a stream of great names have flowed from a woman's lips as flowed from the lips of her mother-in-law! She made her feel dowdy, provincial, dull. Well, what of it? she very sensibly asked herself. Jerome had chosen to marry *her* rather than any of the young women his mother had picked out for him, and her position was unassailable. Jerome loved her, her son loved her. If only this astonishing woman did not contrive to regain her old ascendancy over him, all would be well. For Jerome, she had not forgotten, had nearly given her up, much though he loved her, rather than do something he knew his mother would hate and oppose. That he did not do so was due to the firmness of his grandfather, and a little, perhaps, to her own firmness. And now his mother, she guessed, would do her best to turn him into a European again.

"Well, whatever happens," Susan thought, "I shall not try to come between them."

But the strain of the meeting had been greater than she knew. When Elizabeth had gone, Susan suddenly burst into tears, and Bo, much concerned, took her into his arms, begging her to tell him what had upset her.

"It's nothing," his wife said, trying to control her sobs. "It's nothing. Only . . . I don't know . . . I

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didn't expect her to be so . . . so beautiful, I think. She's the most beautiful creature I ever saw. And yet . . . oh, I don't know what made me cry. It's just nerves, I expect."

Baltimore was glad to have Elizabeth back. She was a feature of the place, and the house which she presently furnished for herself in charming taste—though it was perhaps slightly more French than American—became a place of interest for visitors, who asked to be taken to view merely the outside of it. At parties—oh, what lamentable affairs to one accustomed to courts!—hostesses were pleased if she would appear no matter for how short a time. If she yawned and went home early, they were nevertheless glad that she had come.

It was fortunate, everyone thought, that she had decided to come home when she did, for her father died the next year, at the age of eighty-three. He died peacefully, with his mind at rest. Orderly and methodical during his lifetime, he had been orderly and methodical at his death, and every paper, letter and document of any importance was in its proper place. He closed his eyes upon a world in which he had played a not inconsiderable part, upon a city he had loved and taken pride in; *his* city. What had it been when he first saw it? A mere village, with a population of about three thousand souls. Now it was approaching a hundred thousand. He had lived to see his surviving sons grow up, even the youngest of them. Robert's death was a great grief to him; next to his wife's death and Margaret's, the worst thing that had befallen him. Robert's wife had passed out of his ken. Another ambitious woman . . . though he admired her success. Lady-in-waiting at the Court of William IV, they told

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him, and still a very handsome creature. Well, well, she'd had better luck than poor disobedient Betsy had had. But Betsy's misfortunes were all her own fault, every last one of them. It was difficult not to tell her so, when she complained. Wanted to be a princess, did she . . . or a queen? Only a few days before his death she had denied this. "I never, never, wanted a throne," she said. "Not *on* the throne, but *near* the throne, that was my ambition. And who knows," she had added—this had made the old man angry—"it may come yet. I have a Bonaparte son, and now I have a Bonaparte grandson. It may come yet."

He might have answered her sharply, but he thought it was not worth while. He was too old for arguments, too old. She was with him at the last, and for a little while before he died he thought she was his wife, Dorcas, her dear mother. So she brought him some comfort in the end.

Her father's will only added to the load of disappointment that was hers. She would never, she said, have believed it of any parent. And indeed it was a dreadful shock. It was like a bitter, angry outburst from the grave itself, and gave her a feeling of horrified surprise, it was so clearly designed to *punish*.

Twice he had revenged himself on her for all the trouble and chagrin she had caused him . . . and for those letters; those letters that had hurt and stung and irritated him over so many years; once when he had succeeded in marrying Bo to Susan May Williams, and once again at his death. While the will was being read to her, a bitter, contemptuous little smile played about Elizabeth's lips. This was the last will and testament of one who had believed himself to be a good man and

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a good Christian! He had meant to humiliate her, and in as public a way as possible. The wording of that part of the will that referred to her seemed to burn itself upon her mind, as with an acid.

The conduct of my daughter Betsy has through life been so disobedient that in no instance has she ever consulted my opinions or feelings; indeed she has caused me more anxiety and trouble than all my other children put together, and her folly and misconduct have occasioned me a train of expense that first and last has cost me much money. Under such circumstances it would not be reasonable, just or proper that she should inherit and participate with my other children in an equal division of my estate; considering, however, the weakness of human nature, and that she is still my daughter, it is my will and pleasure to provide for her as follows, viz: I give and devise to my said daughter Betsy, first, the house where she was born, and which is now occupied by Mr. Duncan, the shoe-maker. [This was before the building of the house in South Street.] Secondly, the houses and lots on the corner of Market Street bridge, now occupied by Mr. Tully, the chair-maker, and Mr. Priestly, the cabinet-maker. Thirdly, the three new adjoining brick houses and the one on the corner of Market and Frederick Streets. Fourthly, two new brick houses and lots on Gay Street, near Griffith's bridge; for and during the term of the natural life of my said daughter Betsy; and after her death I give, devise and bequeath the same to my grandson, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte.

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There were other more generous bequests to Bo, but this did not appease her. She might have forgiven her father's indictment of her had it not been so publicly made (for she hated the publishing abroad of family disagreements), but what she could not forgive, and never did forgive, was the meanness of the bequests. His other children—those who had been content to stay at home—were left well off, while her, his eldest and only surviving daughter, he had to all intents and purposes disinherited.

But were the bequests so mean? Comparatively speaking, perhaps they were, but he had left her ten houses and six lots, all in a part of Baltimore where property was steadily rising in value. She expected sympathy, and got it, but in her heart she suspected that she would do more with her small portion of her father's estate than the other members of the family could do with their far larger ones.

"Everything and everyone having failed me," she said one day to Bo, "I will be a woman of business and nothing but a woman of business. In this desert where it seems I am obliged to eke out existence, nothing else is left to me."

It hurt him that she should speak like this, even though he knew it was her habit to exaggerate and dramatize her discontents. He longed to make up to her for the blows that fate seemed so ready to deal her. "How can I?" he sometimes asked himself. "Only by loving her, and God knows I do."

Her excursions into Baltimore society brought her no pleasure. Here, everything was for the young; everything was done with the object of bringing the "young folks" together and giving them what was called a

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"good time". There was no social life at all, as she understood it, for people of her age. The other women had homes, and stayed in them. They took care of their husbands, their children, their servants, their linen chests, their provision cupboards, their sewing and mending. If they went out to balls or parties, they kept well in the background, pushing the young people forward and taking pleasure in their immature triumphs. If they danced, they danced a little shamefacedly. If they talked—but that was just what they did not do. They gossiped or they chattered. There *was* no talk. Conversation, in America, did not exist.

Madame Mère died within a year of the death of Mr. Patterson, so that Bo lost both grandfather and grandmother within twelve months of each other. Elizabeth heard that Jerome ("I knew *he* would be there," she said), Lucien, Cardinal Fesch and Rosa Mellini were all at her bedside, and were with her till the end. Her will, when the contents were made known, came as no shock to Elizabeth, who already knew the terms of it very well, for she had long ago employed a discreet person in Rome to find out for her who was mentioned in it and who was not. She had left nothing at all to Bo, a fact that, at the time she first knew of it, caused Elizabeth to feel, as she expressed it, "sick at the stomach—the way unjust proceedings always affect me".

But the old lady had reasons for what she did. She had felt, for years, not a little troubled about the threat to the validity of Jerome's second marriage, which her acceptance of Bo as a member of the family entailed. If he were publicly recognized by her and mentioned in her will, it would be dealing a blow at Jerome and

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Catherine, and their children. She felt that she was in duty bound to consider them first, genuinely attached though she was to Bo. Besides, she had discussed it all a hundred times with Cardinal Fesch, and he had assured her that he himself intended to remember the young man in his will. This, together with the little legacy left to him by Pauline, was surely enough. Policy and maternal feelings demanded, therefore, that she made no mention of him.

Elizabeth regarded it as just one more example of the injustice of things and the unreliability of the Bonaparte family. The old lady had appeared to like Bo particularly well, and he would have valued so highly any little remembrance—a picture, a letter, a trinket, a quite small sum. But what she minded most of all for him was that his name was not there among the names of the members of her family. And as she was the head of that family, the slight was particularly noticeable.

But Bo did not concern himself with the matter of the will at all. He grieved that the old lady, so tragic, so gallant, so tremendously dignified, was dead. He would never see her again, and he was sorry. That was all. Deaths in the Bonaparte family now seemed to follow deaths. Catherine, Jerome's faithful, adoring wife, had already died at Lausanne two years before, a great grief to Madame Mère, who had loved her devotedly; then Charlotte died, quite young still; then Cardinal Fesch.

"He was a good cardinal and a good man," Elizabeth said to Bo. "He never regarded the divorce of your father and myself as legal. He is one of the few prelates who never feared Napoleon, and said what he believed to be the truth. I admired him greatly."

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She admired him still more when the contents of his will were made known, for he left Bo fifty thousand francs; not a fortune, certainly, when one took into consideration that he had recently sold his great house in Paris for two million francs. Still, it was something, and she urged upon Bo the desirability of going to Rome to claim it.

"If you are not there," she said, "the rest of the family will certainly try to find the means of defrauding you of it."

Bo thought this unlikely, but she urged it so strongly that at last he agreed to go. As soon as he had consented, she said she would go with him. It would be like old times, just the two of them abroad together. Susan had no wish to leave her boy, and, knowing besides, how much it would mean to her mother-in-law to have her son with her for a while, she made the child her excuse for staying at home. Actually she cared little for travel and marvelled that her mother-in-law could face the ordeal of crossing the Atlantic again and again. No woman that she knew of, no woman, she believed, anywhere, had made the journey so often.

So the two set out together, and Elizabeth stayed in Paris, in the Rue d'Alger, while Bo went on to Rome. The state of politics in France now interested her keenly. Louis Napoleon, son of Louis and Hortense, had attempted a *coup d'état* at Strasbourg, and had failed. He was trying, she thought, to ape his uncle and she thought little, at the time, of his activities. A dreamy, obstinate young man, she had met him once only and that was some years ago in Florence. She thought that if he had possessed more personality, more might have come of his efforts. And if something should some day

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come of them—well, she would not be slow in pushing Bo's claims. For what else had she been saving up a fortune?

From Paris, she wrote to her dear Lady Morgan, best of friends, most loved and admired of all the women she knew:

"You will be less surprised to know of my arrival in Europe than I am to find myself here. I never supposed that I had preserved sufficient energy and moral courage to put into effect my inclination to absent myself from the *République par excellence*. A residence for a few months in the *État Unis* would cure the most ferocious republican of the mania of republics."

She mourned that so many of her friends had died, or altered. Madame Benjamin Constant had remembered her and asked her to dine, but life was not gay, now, as it used to be.

"Have you no agreeable work to promise us?" she asked.

"The poor Duchesse d'Abrantés, Madame Junot, made a sad end—the natural consequence of prodigal expenditure." (A thing Elizabeth could neither understand nor forgive.) "Her pecuniary difficulties, it is said, caused her death. . . ."

"I wonder that you did not select Paris rather than London for a permanent *séjour*. I should much prefer living at Florence, but there lives there one individual whom I wish not to meet again."

But Jerome, she soon learnt, was not in fact living in Florence, but just outside it, in the country, and he was living on a vastly different and more humble scale than formerly. Financially, he was in very low water indeed, for at Catherine's death the allowances both from her

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brother and from the Tzar had ceased. He hardly knew which way to turn to augment his fortunes again. It was, no doubt at all, the unhappiest period of his whole life. "And he could, if he pleased, have saved up a fortune," was Elizabeth's comment.

She visited Lady Morgan in London and felt refreshed by her talks with her friend. The authoress still had a large and admiring circle about her, and there Elizabeth heard for a while—and contributed to—the sort of conversation she liked best. Bo was with her—in possession of his legacy—and they presently sailed together from Bristol. Elizabeth had been in favour of taking passage in the new steamship *The Great Western*, but Bo, upon investigation, heard so much of her discomforts that he persuaded his mother to trust herself, as usual, to one of the large, fast clippers instead. But Elizabeth, though she had not yet been on a steamer, was already converted to steam, and believed that the new mode of travel had come to stay.

She was in Baltimore once more, enduring existence rather than existing, when she heard the news of Jerome's third marriage. He had met, in Florence, and been much drawn to, a wealthy and agreeable woman of title—the Marchesa Bartolini-Badelli. This was not at all unnatural. He was lonely and poor; she was only forty, and, rumour said, attractive, while Jerome was fifty-six and deeply in debt. What she saw in Jerome, Elizabeth found it hard to imagine, unless she was hypnotized—as others, indeed, had been before her!—by the name of Bonaparte. But what made Elizabeth go into peals of ironical laughter—and caused Bo intense disgust—was the fact that well-born though this lady was, and a Marchesa, Jerome would only agree to a

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morganatic marriage. Once having been a king, once having married the daughter of a king, he would stoop no lower for a wife!

It gave Elizabeth a painful kind of joy to see the husband who had discarded her commit such an act of baseness and of folly.

"Madame la Marquise," she told Bo, after reading a letter from the Contessa Arrighetti, in whose palazzo she had once lived, in Florence, "has paid all his debts and has set him up in a delightful house in the town. The Contessa says no one in Florence talks of anything else. But that is not all his good fortune. He has married his daughter, Mathilde, to the son of my old friend Prince Demidoff, who inherited all his millions. Really, there is no justice in this world. Now your father will have all the money at his disposal that he can possibly want. You'll see, he will drag himself up now to some sort of place and position."

"I can't help being glad that his old age is provided for," said Bo. "After all, he paid me an allowance for some years, and showed me a great deal of kindness. I only wish he had married this woman. There is something too absurd in the idea of a morganatic wife for him."

"Wait long enough," said Elizabeth, "and *anything* may happen in this life. I feel that nothing on earth can surprise me now."

Jerome wrote a letter to Bo in due course, acquainting him with his "happiness". There was other news in the letter. He greatly deplored, it seemed, the dangerous political activities of Louis' son, Louis Napoleon, who was still intriguing against the King. "It makes everything more difficult," Jerome said, "for me, and for all

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the Bonaparte family, for my relations with Louis Philippe have been steadily improving, and there was every possibility that I might, before long, have been permitted to return to France, where my heart has ever been. Now this happy fulfilment of my hopes, has, I fear, been indefinitely postponed."

"He'll get back," said Elizabeth. "I feel sure of it. Either as an exile returning by the King's permission, or as a Bonaparte restored to power again—I feel it in my bones. Your father is quite a useful weathercock. Watch him, and it is possible to guess from what quarter the wind is blowing. If only," she said, sadly, "it would blow you to Europe too, how happy I should be!"

"It would have to be something in the nature of a hurricane," said Bo, and gave Susan a reassuring look.

CHAPTER XVII

FROM Baltimore, Elizabeth watched events in Paris with enormous interest. She heard of the overthrow of Louis Philippe without any very great regret, for though she was a monarchist she thought him a "poor excuse for a monarch". When he and the Queen escaped from the Tuileries by a back entrance and slipped away to England and the comforts of Claremont, she knew, beyond any possibility of doubt, that *some* member of the Bonaparte family—Louis Napoleon in all likelihood—would find a way of placing himself at the head of the government once more. For republics seemed short-lived in France, and there were still plenty of Bonapartes. She had to wait some years, however, before her prophecies were fulfilled, but the very fact of Louis Napoleon having been elected to the presidency was enough to send her packing off to Europe again, in spite of her sixty-five years.

This time she went by steam, in one of Mr. Samuel Cunard's new boats, the *Arcadia*. It was, in many ways, an interesting journey. She had no particular object in going to Europe just then except to find out as much as she could of what was happening there, talk to old friends, and refresh herself. She was like an amphibious creature which, swimming in its natural element, yet has to come up, from time to time, in order not to suffocate.

Her letter to Lady Morgan, on the election of Louis

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Napoleon, showed that her understanding of affairs was as keen as ever. Gorchakov had been right when he had assured her that she would have made an excellent diplomat.

You may be quite convinced [she wrote] that I consider it a *bonne fortune pour moi* that you inhabit London. To enjoy again your agreeable society will be my tardy compensation for the long, weary, unintellectual years inflicted on me in this my dull native country, to which I have never owed advantages, pleasures or happiness.

The Emperor hurled me back on what I most hated on earth—my Baltimore obscurity; even that shock could not divest me of the admiration I felt for his genius and glory. I have ever been an imperial Bonapartiste *quand même*, and I do feel enchanted at the homage paid by six millions of voters to his memory in voting an imperial president; *le prestige du nom* has, therefore, elected the prince, who has my best wishes, my most ardent hopes for an empire.

In London once more, at Lady Morgan's pleasant, if crowded, little house in Knightsbridge, she was happy—as happy as it was possible for her to be. The two elderly ladies had much to say to one another. Had Lady Morgan read the *Memoirs* of Lamartine? ("I knew him in Florence, you know.") Of Chateaubriand? ("What a liar he always was!") They met the clever people of the day, talked, visited, had their sad moments, and parted with affection and with the melancholy conviction that they would never see each other again.

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"From now on," said Elizabeth, "one's whole life becomes a repetition of those words, 'Never again!'"

"Oh, don't say it, my dear, don't say it!" cried Lady Morgan. "It is one of the things one tries not to think of. After all, every day, even at our age, is a new day, with new things to be done."

"I am a realist, I am afraid," said Elizabeth.

She was a realist indeed when, a few years later, the Second Empire dawned in France. That "dreamy, obstinate young man", now forty-four, was Emperor of the French. She had foreseen it. She would not let Bo rest until he had written a letter of congratulation to his cousin.

"Tell him," said his mother, "that you hope soon to visit him in the Tuileries. Tell him that your son is now grown up, and in the army, and a fine young man. Tell him that nothing has given us all so much pleasure as the fact that another Bonaparte has placed himself upon the Imperial throne. Only write soon; write soon! You have allowed yourself to get too much out of touch with your relations."

So Bo wrote—he had meant to, in his own good time—and received a reply from the Tuileries.

MY COUSIN,

Notwithstanding the distance and a very long separation I have never doubted the affectionate interest with which you have followed all the happenings of my career. Also it is with great pleasure that I received the letter which brought me your congratulations and good wishes. I thank you for it. The news that you send me of your son's vocation for a military career and of his

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admission into a regiment of mounted rifles has not been less agreeable.

When circumstances permit, I shall be, believe me, very happy to see you again. I pray, my cousin, that God may have you in His sainted keeping.

Written at the palace of the Tuileries, 9th February, 1853.

NAPOLEON.

"The next thing," his mother said, on reading this letter, "is to go, and take young Jerome with you."

Bo was very reluctant to leave his home and Susan, but Charles, his second boy, was only a child, and he was loath to take him to Europe at such a tender age. Moreover, Susan herself had no wish to go. The whole subject was painful to her, and she would pick up her sewing and leave the room while he and his mother discussed it. Why, *why* must Jerome embroil himself in the affairs of these wretched Bonapartes? She wished with all her heart and soul that he had been born John Smith. If only his mother would let him alone—but she was for ever urging him on, begging him to establish, once and for all, his French nationality, and more important still, she insisted, his French legitimacy.

No time, Elizabeth kept repeating, should be lost. She could not accompany him to Paris herself because his father was now living there—supported by hismorganatic wife's money and the salary of forty-five thousand francs a year that he was receiving as Governor of the Invalides, where his brother's ashes, brought from St. Helena thirteen years before, had been laid to rest. No, Paris was impossible for her now; she

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had no wish to come face to face with Jerome. But Bo must go, and go soon.

"You owe it to me," she insisted. "You owe it to yourself. You owe it to your sons."

She was compelling in her earnestness. (And had he not vowed, years ago, to make her happy if he could?) The fires of her energy, banked for some years, were now brightly burning. Her fine dark eyes were undimmed, her small face, still amazingly unlined, was illuminated by a new, strong hope. Even now . . . perhaps *even now* she might see her life's ambitions fulfilled. In the end she got her way.

"Never mind about money," she said, surprisingly. "If you need more, call upon me. What else have I saved for and stinted myself for, all these years?"

The three Jeromes, the ex-King, Bo, and Bo's son, met in Paris. Young Jerome took everything lightly and gaily. He was not at all favourably impressed by his grandfather, and he looked upon his own presence in Paris chiefly as a heaven-sent opportunity to join a French regiment, which he had for some time longed to do. He wanted to win military honours abroad, and he had every intention of seizing the first occasion to do so.

Bo soon learnt, with sadness and regret, that his father, since Catherine's death, had returned to his old habits. He was now an elderly roué, carrying on, under the eyes of his unhappy morganatic wife, as many affairs as he pleased, or as many as luck brought him. But she was not blind, like Catherine, nor did he make a great effort to conceal his activities. It was a sad household at the Palais Royale.

But he seemed, at first, delighted to see his first-born

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son, and pressed Bo and young Jerome to stay with him while they were in Paris; an invitation Bo decided, very wisely, to decline.

He and young Jerome dined at St. Cloud with the Emperor, and were warmly received. Louis Napoleon's young wife, Eugénie de Montijo, whom he had married the year before, made the most enchanting of Empresses, and Mathilde Demidoff, Bo's half-sister, who had acted as hostess at the Tuileries until the Emperor's marriage, was also there, and seemed delighted to pick up the threads of their friendship again. That young Jerome made a good impression on all of them was easy enough to see. He was extremely good-looking, had the easiest possible manners, and a delightful smile. In a French uniform he was irresistible.

Bo and the Emperor had much to talk about besides the matter that was uppermost in Bo's mind, for Louis Napoleon had visited America not many years before, and had been Bo's guest. When the ladies withdrew, young Jerome went with them, and the two older men sat over their cigars. Bo then put forward his views and feelings concerning the rights of his family, and the Emperor concurred with him on all points.

"You must, of course, first reinstate yourself as a French citizen," he said. "It will be necessary, before we take the matter any further." And Bo agreed, with the heavy feeling at his heart that for his mother's sake he was betraying his own country. But he wrote to her that night that the first step had been taken.

And then came young Jerome's opportunity to win military honours for himself. The Crimean War, most unnecessary of campaigns, broke out, and he departed, gaily enough, with his regiment. At the same time

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went his father's unpleasing half-brother, Napoleon, who was to come back from the war with the nickname Plon-Plon, and with a diminished reputation as a soldier. Jerome went as a lieutenant, Napoleon as a general.

"Jerome has gone with his regiment, to the Crimea," Bo wrote to Susan, "but never fear, he will come back to us safe and well. His heart is in it, and he left confidently and happily. I am proud of our son."

But for Bo there were delays and opposition. The opposition made itself felt gradually, and he guessed, easily enough, from what quarter it came. His half-brother, Napoleon, before leaving for the Crimea, had shown no friendliness either to himself or to young Jerome, and Bo fully expected that he would prove an obstacle in his path. So far only one thing had been accomplished. His reinstatement as a French citizen had been announced in the Paris *Bulletin des Lois*, but the other matter, the question of the legitimacy, hung fire.

With a growing doubt and impatience he waited.

"You must *force* them to act," Elizabeth wrote from Baltimore. "I have always told you that kind words were cheap in the Bonaparte family, and it is all you will get from them unless you insist upon deeds."

Early in the following year, Bo's cause received a serious set-back. The King of Würtemberg came to Paris, burning with indignation because he had heard that the validity of his late sister's marriage was in question. He saw all the family, and expressed himself in the plainest terms. At the same time, Bo's father received a letter from his son in the Crimea, complaining bitterly at the way "these American bastards"

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were being treated in Paris. He asked if it were his father's wish and intention to bastardize Mathilde and himself.

"You had no right," he wrote angrily, "to receive them as you did without my permission."

So complaints were reaching the Emperor from several quarters, and the King of Württemberg protested particularly strongly against the granting, to the Americans, of the right to use the name of Bonaparte.

Louis Napoleon thought he saw a way out of the difficulty. He decided to try to catch Bo with that same bit of sugar that has caught so many an unwary bird; he offered to create him the Duc de Sartène, if he would relinquish his right to the name of Bonaparte.

"As there is a family called De Guise," Louis Napoleon said to Eugénie, who laughed at him for thinking the plan would succeed, "so there will be a family called De Sartène."

But Bo had enough of his mother in him to prefer the name of Bonaparte, and he said so. And he was inevitably reminded of the time when his father had offered his mother the principality of Smalkalden (she had often enough told him of it) and been refused. Legal advice was called in. Bo took his case to the best advocate in Paris, and a battle began.

There were days—many days—when Bo wished to heaven he had never left America. It was a weary, unpleasant business, and he was only comforted by the safe return of his son, with the 7th Dragoons, from the Crimea. He had served with gallantry and had earned the decorations of three countries—of France, of England and of Turkey.

But Plon-Plon had also returned—and somewhat

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earlier. There was cholera in the Crimea, and he had not wished to run the risk of catching it. It soon became known that the nickname Plon-Plon was derived from *Craint-Plomb*. He had not, it seemed, stood fire well. In fact he was much the same sort of soldier that his father had been before him, only in his life there was to be no Battle of Waterloo at which he could, at least partially, redeem himself.

He came back full of fury against the Americans, and he appealed at once to the Imperial *Conseille de Famille* to forbid the use, by them, of the name of Bonaparte. Berryer, Bo's advocate, made his plea ably enough, and the result was a sort of compromise; the American Bonapartes were to be conceded their right to the name, but they were not to be considered the legitimate branch of the family.

Bo was exceedingly angry, and wrote a letter to the Emperor protesting against this verdict, but the tide had turned against him. His father, who had invited him to a dinner at the Palais Royale, sent his aide-de-camp to his rooms in the Rue des Champs-Élysées to inform him that the dinner would not now take place.

"And a very good thing, too," laughed young Jerome, who refused to take these proceedings with any seriousness at all. "We will at least be spared the sight of the Baroness."

"The Baroness?" his father asked, puzzled.

"You haven't heard? But I suppose all this is painful to you, while to me it is merely extremely comic. Perhaps I had better say nothing."

"You may as well tell me," his father said.

"Though I suppose I can guess."

"There is another lady, besides the Marchesa, in my

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grandfather's household," said the young man. "Her name was told to me in confidence, so I will not repeat it. She is French, and a Baroness. She is trying to drive out the poor Marchesa, and I very much fear that she will succeed, for the old man adores her, and they say she is even about to present him with——"

Bo put his hands over his ears.

"No more, no more!" he cried. "I can guess the rest. My God! And that man is my father!"

"A very remarkable man, too, in some ways," said young Jerome, lightly. "There's no denying that."

It was the end.

"Back to America, my son," said Bo, "and I hope with all my heart that I shall not have to leave it again."

But he returned alone, for young Jerome, who was enjoying his life abroad enormously, joined the Chasseurs d'Afrique and was sent to Algiers. When he returned from there he found Eugénie ready enough to welcome him to the Tuileries. The subject of the young man's father's legitimacy was one that interested her not at all. She found him charming, and made a friend of him, as did Mathilde Demidoff. His friendship for Eugénie stood her in good stead one day, many years later, when he escorted the frightened, fleeing Empress to England and to the safety of Camden House, in Kent. But no one foresaw any such improbable adventure then, and he was a delightful companion, very popular, and very much at home in Paris.

Bo's pious wish was not to be granted him. His father, who had succeeded in driving away the Marchesa and putting the Baroness in her place—though not even as a morganatic wife—died at his

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country place of Villegenis, at the age of seventy-five, and all the old problems came up again.

That they would have reappeared, but for Elizabeth, is doubtful, but even at seventy-four she had not lost her energy and her ambition. The news of Jerome's death roused her once more to activity. She was living then in a boarding-house on the corner of St. Paul and Lexington Streets. Housekeeping had become too troublesome, and she believed that her servants cheated her. Her rooms in the boarding-house were on the fourth floor, and almost the only exercise she took nowadays was in climbing the stairs to reach them. She had adopted a style of dressing that she was never to abandon; she always wore black, and she carried, in rain or in shine, a red silk umbrella. When people commented on it she told them that she liked it because it threw a bright colour on her face: "Which needs colour, nowadays, and it serves as well as rouge, of which I disapprove."

She was rich; really rich. Not "comfortable", or well off, but rich, rich, rich! She herself knew that she possessed something like a million and a half dollars. And she had made it out of the pension granted her for those few years by Napoleon, out of the ten houses left to her by her "unnatural parent", and by her careful savings. "Once I had everything but money," she was fond of saying, "now I have nothing but money."

She was not, now, as unhappy as she had formerly been. Her grandson, Jerome, was realizing some of her ambitions. Though not "on the throne", he was "near the throne", and she took enormous pleasure in his success. She was also extremely fond of Charles,

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born so many years later, and she got a considerable amount of satisfaction, too, out of the mere fact of being a rich woman.

When Jerome died (and was buried in the Invalides!) there was no one between Plon-Plon and Bo—the two surviving sons of Jerome—and the Imperial throne, but the little five-year-old Prince Imperial whom they called Lu-lu. Should anything happen to this child, one of these two half-brothers was the rightful heir to the throne of France. For Elizabeth, this was a challenge. Her son's legitimacy *must* be established. As soon as it was known that Jerome, in his will, had left everything to Plon-Plon, his son by his second marriage, and had not even mentioned Bo, his first-born, Elizabeth made her protest and claimed her share in the estate.

Bo, left to himself, would have let it all pass, but with his mother to urge—to insist upon—action, he put aside his own wishes (and Susan's), and in the Cunard Line steamer, *Britannic*, they crossed the Atlantic once again. Young Jerome was already in Paris. He had been present at his grandfather's funeral, but very inconspicuously, and at the rooms Bo and Elizabeth presently occupied in the Rue des Champs-Élysées, he was able to describe to them all that had taken place.

They went, once again, to Berryer.

"If he failed before, he will succeed this time," Elizabeth said.

Once more she was prepared to spend money, and to spend it freely. For the second time in her life she had no thought of saving. The infinite care that, for years, had prompted her to save lumps of sugar from her breakfast trays and to cut up old undergarments to make handkerchiefs, was now completely swept away.

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This was just such a moment as, all these years past, she had been saving for. Everything was at stake. It was her last opportunity.

She was like steel. She did not tire. She would not tire. She talked to the lawyers, went over documents—oh! but some of those old letters made strange reading now!—and discussed the case endlessly with Bo and her grandson; she might not have been a day over sixty. She was a formidable little figure, but her beauty still flickered on, though with a feeble light. She had not grown thin; her body still had that charming roundness of youth, a slender roundness, amazing in a woman of her years. Her features retained their somewhat cold perfection, and her eyes were still lively and compelling. She wore, on all occasions, a black bonnet trimmed with a rather coquettish little orange feather. By this, and the red umbrella, she was known everywhere. She had the dominating and invincible air of a woman of property; of a woman, too, who has nothing to fear from the neglect or unkindness of others, because there is nothing, now, that she wants from them or that they can take from her.

She trusted Berryer; she trusted his assistant, Legrand. She believed that her case was just, and, still better in a court of law, flawless. She believed that no court on earth could deny her son's right to recognition and a portion of his father's estate.

Her poise, her dignity, her beauty, were all assets, and had their effect in court. She had the sympathy of all except those who were actually fighting against her. Her case was clear, moving, simple, appealing. Here was a deserted wife; here was a mother who for fifty years had been fighting for the legitimacy of her son.

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Few things could have made a stronger appeal to the sentiment of the French.

When Berryer, in presenting her case, said that Jerome's first marriage had not been and could not have been legally annulled, it seemed to her, for a moment, as though Napoleon's shadow was over the court-room, and as if his voice, full of irony, spoke.

"*Could* not be annulled? But I annulled it. Is there anything more to be said?"

When M^e Berryer had done, it did not seem to her that there could be anything to say on the other side that could shake her case. But she was unused to courts of law. It was her first appearance in one.

For then M^e Allou, for Plon-Plon, rose and destroyed all that M^e Berryer had so carefully and so firmly built up. Jerome Bonaparte, at the time he married, was but nineteen years of age. He married without the consent of parents or guardians. According to French law, if it could be established that such a marriage had been performed *in good faith* and without knowledge of the facts, the offspring were held to be legitimate. But, in this case, both parties had been made perfectly aware of all the circumstances. They had been informed of them, most correctly, by M. Pichon, the Consul-General in Washington. They had been duly and solemnly warned that such a marriage was not and could not be valid according to French law. The mother of the bridegroom, Madame Mère, had protested against the marriage . . . and after it was performed, she herself had joined in petitioning for and obtaining an annulment.

Little by little Elizabeth saw her case chipped away, broken down, until it seemed there would be nothing left of it. *Her* case was upheld by humanity, by reason,

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by sentiment; the case for the other side by the laws.

And she realized, as she sat there, staring in front of her, that too many political forces were arrayed against her. *It mattered to France that she should not be permitted to win her case.* From the point of view of France, it was more just and right that the validity of the second marriage should be upheld than the validity of the first. If anything should happen to the young Prince Imperial, was it right that the Imperial Crown should pass out of the hands of the man who was the issue of a marriage arranged and sanctioned by Napoleon, and into the hands of a man whom Napoleon himself had pronounced illegitimate?

She knew, as the case drew to a close, that she had been fantastically optimistic in bringing the action at all. She knew, before the judgment was pronounced, that Napoleon's right to annul the first marriage would be upheld. Plon-Plon had won. All that she would get from the trial would be the sympathy of Europe—and one more crushing defeat. And, added to the defeat, the costs, which now seemed burdensome indeed.

She had even lost what she had gained before, at the Imperial family council—the right to the name of Bonaparte; for the court now ruled that when used by the American Bonapartes, it must be bracketed with the name of Patterson.

Bo tried to comfort her. And for once in her life she tried to comfort Bo. She knew that, but for her, he would never have brought the case.

They returned to their rooms in the Rue des Champs-Élysées, a quiet and dispirited little group. Defeat is rarely agreeable, and even young Jerome was subdued, his gaiety temporarily quenched. But he soon threw

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off his depression and made up his mind to try, at least, to persuade his father and grandmother to throw off theirs. He suddenly jumped up and began walking restlessly about the room, very elegant and very slim in his French uniform and looking as though nothing on earth could trouble him for long.

"Look here," he said, striding about, "I've got something to say. It's like this. We're beaten, but do we care? How is it going to affect us? It won't affect me, not a whit. You see I'm speaking first of myself. Well, it won't affect my military career, I shan't lose a friend by it, and what is more, I'm quite certain I shan't lose a night's sleep. I was quite happy before, I shall be quite happy again. I'm sorry we've lost the case because I hate the sight of Plon-Plon and I'd like him to have been beaten. So would a good many other people I know, and some of them not so far from the Tuileries. Apart from that, and from the money and trouble it's cost you, grandmamma, I haven't a regret. I don't want a French throne, and I don't believe father does. Now, father, let's hear from you. What are your feelings—your real feelings, I mean? Tell us."

Bo sat on the sofa beside his mother, holding one of her hands on his knee. For her, he knew, it was just one more cruel defeat, one more huge injustice, one more cause for bitterness and pain. If they had won their case, his life, with which he had no fault to find, might have been utterly changed. Did he wish it to be changed? In his heart of hearts, he knew that he did not, nor, as he was well aware, did Susan. No one in America questioned his legitimacy. In France, he knew, it was a political far more than a legal question. If he did not intend to live in France—and now he

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certainly did not—it made no real difference at all. And suppose that they had won. Would France, in the event of the Prince Imperial's death, have tolerated an American Bonaparte as Emperor? He doubted it most profoundly. Well, then . . . there was only his mother. He had agreed to fight because it was the only way in which he could hope to recompense her for the humiliation she had had to bear; a heavy one, because of her intense, unbending pride. He had wanted her last years to be happy. Well, he had tried, and he had failed. For himself he was not sorry; for her, he was immeasurably sorry.

“My real feelings?” he said, and looked at her. “We did our best. We failed. What else is there to say? It is an unjust world, but we cannot help that. We did our best.”

Young Jerome turned to Elizabeth. “What do you say, grandmamma? Aren't you just rather thankful it's all over?”

She made no answer. She merely raised her eyes to his, eyes that were dark, vivid, compelling, and looked at him, then gave him her brief little smile. And he knew that she was unbowed, unbeaten, and that if there had been a hope in the world of success, she would have been ready to try again, and again, and again.

They made their plans to return home. The news from America was disquieting, for the country was on the brink of civil war, and it was time that she and Bo went back to look after their interests.

When Bo went out one morning, a few days later, to see to some of the final arrangements, she seized the opportunity to make a little excursion that she had for some time been wanting to make—and alone. Carry-

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ing her valise, which contained money and jewels, and which she would never leave in her rooms, she went out into the street, and hailed a fiacre by holding up and waving her red umbrella. It was extraordinary, she thought, as she gave the driver her instructions and stepped in, that she felt no stiffness or heaviness in her movements. Her body felt, in spite of the tremendous mental and emotional strain of these last few weeks, quite light and young. During her youth and middle age, she had suffered from a variety of complaints, many of them, admittedly, caused or aggravated by her nervous system—which was like so many other female American nervous systems. Now she was in better health than she had ever been in her life. She was enjoying, in fact, the sort of health which makes one unconscious of the body. Rheumatism, gout—these, thank heaven, she had never suffered from. Nor did she seem likely to.

“I believe,” she said to herself, “that I shall live to be a hundred. The reward, probably, of a virtuous life.”

And she wondered whether, if she had to live it again, she would live it differently.

“Of course I would not, still being myself. I would do nothing differently. Nothing.”

All her disappointments she put down to forces over which she had no control, and there had been, heaven knew, enough of them! Her life had been very far from happy. A happy life, she asked herself; what is it? It all comes to this, she decided. One has had a happy life if, as one looks back, the contrast between what one has wanted and what one has received, is not too great. “In my case, it has been enormous. And so my life has

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been unhappy. If I had wanted less; if I had wanted simple things . . . things that were easy to obtain . . . but I did not. I *could* not."

She looked about her at the streets and at the crowds. "How gay, how full of people Paris once seemed to me! Now it all seems sad, empty, meaningless. These people are like shadows. What, I wonder, would London seem like to me now? But I shall never go back there, for Lady Morgan is dead. But if I were to go back, would I like it now, better than Paris? No, it never attracted me very much, apart from my friends. It is a city for men rather than for women. It smells, I always thought, of boot-blackening. Ah, here we are! I had almost forgotten."

The fiacre drew up at the gates of the Invalides, and she asked the driver to wait for her.

"I shall not be very long."

How vast it was, how small she felt, making her way across the shining floors! There were, she was sorry to see, a good many people, but it was near the hour for *déjeuner*; perhaps they would be going soon. She went slowly, reverently, to the railing, and looked down. There he lay, shut away from her eyes, that had never looked on him. Bertrand, when he came to America a good many years ago, had asked to meet her. He came, and talked about Napoleon the whole of a summer afternoon. He talked about the days when he was with him on St. Helena. The Emperor was sorry, Bertrand said, that he had had to use her so harshly, but he understood that Madame Patterson bore him no ill-will. "Those whom I have wronged have forgiven me," he said; "those I loaded with kindness have forsaken me."

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"So you knew," she thought, looking down at the tomb, "that I bore you no ill-will?"

She stood there for a long time, very quietly, a small black figure holding a black bag. One hand rested on the rail. She whispered, "I have never been so close to you before."

The crowd was thinning, and she thought that if she waited a little longer, there would be fewer still. The fiacre was waiting, but never mind. So much money had melted away these last few days that a little more would surely make no difference.

When there were only two or three people left, she went to the other, newer tomb. She was watched, she knew, by an attendant, who seemed to think her behaviour or appearance unusual, but she paid no attention.

The inscription here was a temporary one. She did not read it, because she did not wish to be irritated by it. She wished to preserve her extraordinary sense of quiet and of peace. As she stood there, waiting to discover what emotions the sight of that tomb would evoke, she was aware of a great, an almost overpowering sadness. She had not imagined that she would feel so sad, so desolate, so unutterably forlorn. The hand in its black kid glove, that lay upon the railing, trembled. Tears forced themselves from under her eyelids and she was blinded by broken spears of light. She had not expected to shed tears. Oh, forlorn, forlorn! She saw him rowing away from her in the small boat, until he was lost to sight among a maze of boats in Lisbon harbour. With lowered head she spoke to him, in a whisper, as a woman speaks to a lover who has abandoned her.

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"Pourquoi m'a tu trahi, toi?"

Slowly she turned away, slowly she went out to the waiting fiacre. A little snow was falling, the skies were low and grey. She was not sorry, this time—and for the first and last time in her life—to be going back to America, and to Baltimore, and as she stepped into the fiacre she only knew that if, before, her body had felt light, her heart, now, felt light also, as if it had been purged. Purged, by what? By pity? Pity for whom? Pity for him? Pity for herself? for both of them? She wondered. She might perhaps have whispered over that tomb as she had whispered over the first one: "I have never been so close to you before." And, curiously enough, she thought, it would have been the truth.

THE END





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